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The Nation.

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HE REAL STORY IN BOSTON
Victor Navasky

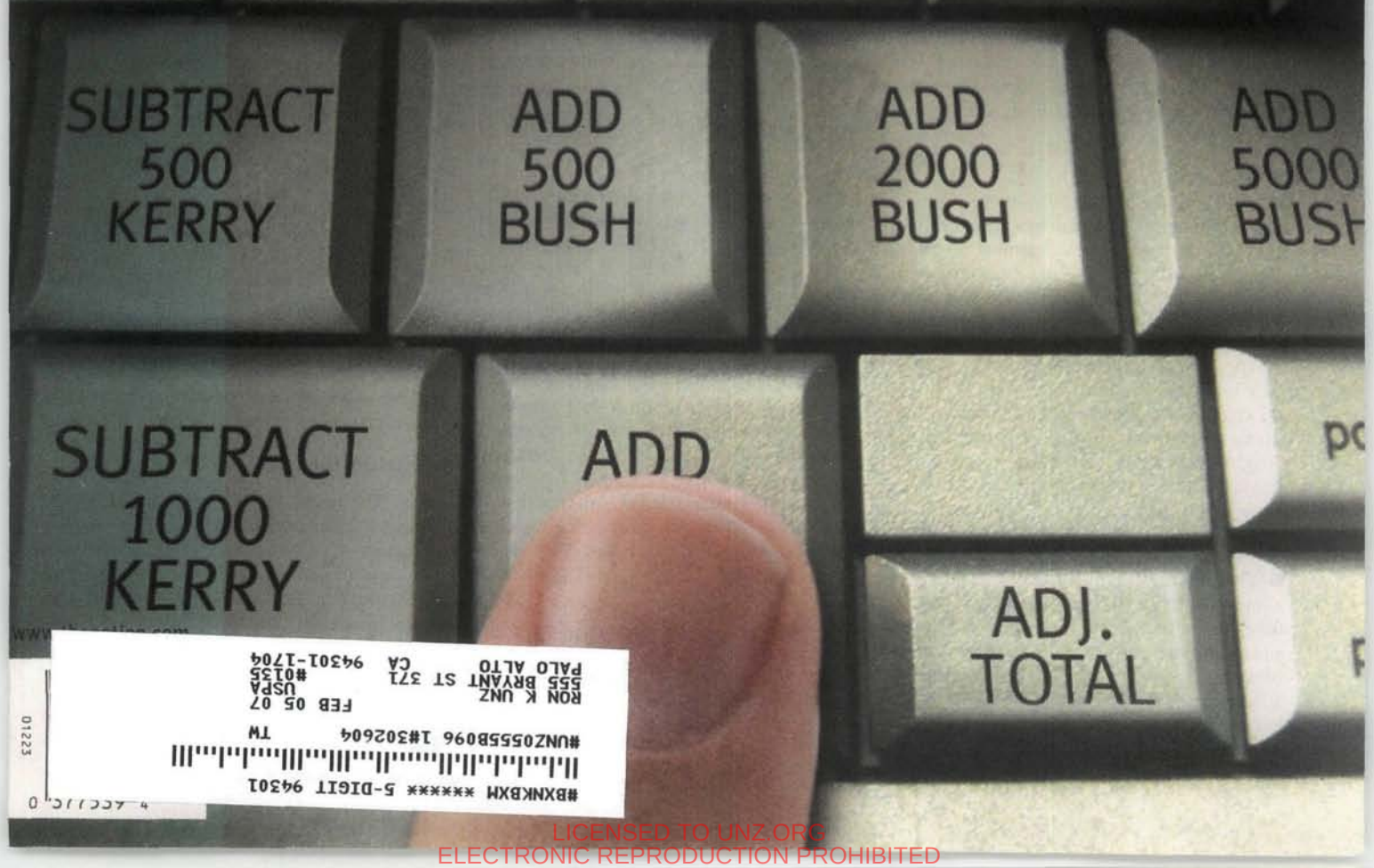
THE 9/11 REPORT
David Corn

BUSH ZONES GO NATIONAL
Jim Hightower

LATIN AMERICA'S LONGEST WAR
Peter Canby

RONNIE DUGGER

HOW THEY COULD STEAL THE ELECTION THIS TIME



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LETTERS

R. O. BLECHMAN

QUE SERRA SERRA

Minneapolis

■ To all the indignant readers who complained about the Richard Serra ad for pleasevote.com ["Letters," Aug. 2/9]: Lighten up! Serra's update of Goya's horrifying *Saturn Devouring One of His Sons* illustrates the nightmarish implications of George W. Bush's domestic and foreign policies. Do these readers recognize Swiftian irony? Should Jonathan Swift have toned down his "modest proposal" to cook and eat Irish children because readers would find its "ghoulishness" "inappropriate," "gross" and "tasteless"? In this time of the madness of the Bushites, we need all the Swiftian irony we can get.

DONALD E. WINTERS

Panorama City, Calif.

■ I was astonished by the angry letters about the pleasevote.com ad. I cannot believe people found it obscene, especially after the horrible pictures from Abu Ghraib. *That* is obscenity.

MARSHA L. RESPESS

Fargo, ND

■ Hey, folks, people really do get "eaten" in wars! Because the current cabal has kept the nasty part of this conflict out of the media—not even allowing pictures of returning coffins or of our thousands of wounded, we think this is a nice "clean" war. Wake up, people! Thousands are being devoured in Iraq! Congratulations to *The Nation*!

ART LIES

Allentown, Pa.

■ The pleasevote.com ad grabbed my attention, and as a young person who has been trying to convince my friends to vote (most of whom are unwilling), I needed something attention-grabbing. That ad now hangs on the wall above our TV, where everyone who visits must look at it. Thank you, pleasevote.com.

BOB RUSSELL

New York City

■ I congratulate you on Richard Serra's astonishing adaptation of Goya. It was so brilliant I bought an extra copy of the issue to share with friends. Readers' jittery responses indicate the power of real art to unnerve.

MEREDITH TAX

Shreveport, La.

■ What kind of unimaginative, repressive wimps subscribe to *The Nation* these days? I thought Richard Serra's concept was brilliant and an accurate portrayal of the current Administration. The image is not distasteful; Bush is distasteful. Your letter writers are attempting to kill the messenger. Please send me a stack of these posters so I can post them all over town!

MARYANN SPURGIN

CERTAINLY NOT 'VIRTUALLY IGNORED'

Washington, DC

■ Scott Sherman's June 7 "The Rebirth of the *NYRB*," begins with a compelling evocation of the eloquent antiwar protest written by US diplomat John Brady Kiesling as he resigned three weeks before the Iraq war began. Sherman continues, "Greek newspapers were quick to publish Kiesling's pithy and prescient statement, but it was virtually ignored in the US press until *The New York Review of Books* reprinted it at the onset of the Iraq war."

Pithy and prescient Kiesling's letter might have been, but it was not "virtually ignored" by the US press. A day after he faxed the letter, I received a copy and broke the news of it in an article for print and online editions of the *New York Times*. That same day, February 27, 2003, the *Times* website included the letter's full text as a hyperlink within my article. Since I doubt that Kiesling posted the letter on the web and I'm sure the State Department didn't, I'd bet that those Greek newspapers got their text, directly or indirectly, from the *Times*.

I am as susceptible as the next writer to the lure of a compelling opening anecdote. But if narrative clarity runs afoul of facts, facts trump. How can it be true that the US press "virtually ignored" something that a large US newspaper made public in the first place?

FELICITY BARRINGER

SHERMAN REPLIES

Brooklyn, NY

■ Felicity Barringer did indeed break the story of Kiesling's resignation, a commendable scoop. But her editors failed to acknowledge its significance—giving the story only 404 words on page A13 and relegating the full text of Kiesling's stirring, courageous and highly unusual resignation letter to the website. On that very same day, the *Times* devoted half of page A10 to a complete transcript of a blustery prowar speech that George W. Bush delivered to the American Enterprise Institute in Washington.

For the record, the first US publication to reproduce the full text of Kiesling's letter—with old-fashioned ink and paper—was not the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal* or *Los Angeles Times*; it was *The New York Review of Books*.

SCOTT SHERMAN

PATRIOTS—THROW OFF YOUR CHAINS!

Crozet, Va.

■ William Greider surmises the existence of a phenomenon I've been hoping for ["'Embedded Patriots,'" July 12]. Having worked at high levels of both the Israeli and US governments, I am about as cynical as they come. But when this unwarranted war became a reality, as the dire warnings of so many clearsighted critics came to pass, and with the Democrats in Congress giving too many Administration desires a free pass (just say "Negroponte"), it occurred to me that the one hope for the truth to come out was the thousands of faceless people in positions to know who care about this country.

In Washington shortly after the end of his campaign, Howard Dean spoke of journalistic and civic integrity. I believe he was speaking to Greider's "embedded patriots" as well as to those in the media who still possess enough principle to provide a place where these patriots' concerns can be expressed. To Dean, and to all the other patriots who dare not speak so openly, this country and the world will be forever indebted.

JEAN WYANT

THE WEAKLY STANDARD

Wallingford, Pa.

■ Last week I borrowed a friend's van. I was cleaning things out before returning it and discovered an issue of *The Weekly Standard* under the seat. I began reading a feature titled "Scrapbook… The stupidity of the antiwar doomsayers," which mocked various editorials by quoting them and reviling them—e.g., Eric Alterman in *The Nation*: "Is Wolfowitz really so ignorant of history as to believe the Iraqis would welcome us as 'their hoped-for liberators'?"

Well, yes, I thought, Eric certainly hit the nail on the head. But I was puzzled—why did they think this was a stupid observation? Then I saw the date: April 21, 2003. Reading the rest of the magazine was really a hoot, a perfect example of the neocon "Mission Accomplished" mindset. The theme of the entire issue was: Hey fellows, we won, we won! All those stupid liberals are so, so wrong. Now it's all over but the quick and easy establishment of an Iraqi democracy, the postwar planning is ready to roll, just watch the antiwar naysayers eat our dust, etc. Look the issue up; you'll have a blast.

BILL HENDERSON

EMENDATION

■ In "The Jewish Divide on Israel" [July 12], Esther Kaplan referred to two Hillel program directors who resigned after being reprimanded for their articles supporting Israeli and Palestinian peace activism. In fact, one of the two, Aron Gutman of Ithaca College, was let go because of funding problems. He had, however, been taken to task for his *Ithaca Journal* article supporting Israeli and Palestinian peace activists and told Kaplan, "My desire to depart related to these issues"—constraints on expressing his views on Israel/Palestine.

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EDITORIALS

Counting Every Vote

The Democratic platform approved this week by convention delegates in Boston contains strong language regarding the party's commitment to protect the right of Americans to vote—and have their votes counted. "We will call for legislative action that will fully protect and enforce the fundamental Constitutional right of every American to vote—to ensure that the Constitution's promise is fully realized and that, in disputed elections, every vote is counted fully and fairly," the document declares, adding a call for "independently auditable" voting systems.

The message is appropriate. In light of the 2000 Florida recount debacle and the ensuing US Supreme Court intervention, which cost their candidate the presidency, Democrats ought to be leading the fight to fix this country's decaying electoral systems. Yet that strong platform language was not inserted by Democratic presidential nominee John Kerry; it was forced in by Representative Jesse Jackson Jr., a platform committee member who had to fight with Kerry aides, who did not want the document to be too controversial. Jackson prevailed on most points. But he and other activists still worry about whether the party will push hard enough on voting issues. Certainly Kerry and many convention speakers have talked a lot about the need to "count every vote" this year. And the Kerry campaign and the party have worked to assure that votes are cast and counted correctly.

But fundamental flaws remain unaddressed. Voter registration problems, which cost as many as 3 million Americans their right to vote in 2000, have yet to be corrected in many states. In some states new ID requirements could actually make it harder for eligible voters to register. Despite evidence that Florida's "ex-felon" purge lists were used in 2000 to disenfranchise thousands of eligible voters, purges continue across the country. Protections are inadequate to assure that citizens who are denied their voting rights can appeal in time to participate in the election. Even when people do get to vote, they can't be assured that their votes will be counted accurately. According to a study by MIT and Cal Tech, a substantial portion of the roughly 6 million Americans who were disenfranchised in 2000 suffered that fate because of bad ballots and machines, yet thousands of polling places across the country still use the sort of voting machinery that caused problems in Florida and other states in 2000. And, as Ronnie Dugger explains in this issue, tens of thousands more will be using new electronic voting equipment with security problems so severe that California Secretary of State Kevin Shelley has cracked down on its use, and officials in some Ohio counties have simply barred it. It's no wonder that League of Women Voters president Kay Maxwell says, "The 2004 election is in danger."

There is still time to act. The league, the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, the NAACP and other civil rights groups have called for emergency moves to fund the Help America Vote Act adequately, to insure that voter registration data are collected and transferred quickly and effectively and to train election officials. The groups also want states to prevent new purges of voter lists less than ninety days before the election, so that those purged can be notified and given enough time to challenge the decision. Congress should pass legislation requiring a paper trail for electronic voting machines; short of that, activists at the state level should get secretaries of state and elections boards to guarantee the security of electronic voting. That's a long agenda. It'll need a high-profile push to get it addressed. That's why John Kerry and the Democrats ought to do as Jesse Jackson Jr. suggests and make voting rights central to the fall campaign. For motivation, they need only recall the crime scene that was Florida in 2000.

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COMMENT

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CONTRIBUTING EDITORS: Kai Bird, George Black, Robert L. Borosage, Stephen F. Cohen, Marc Cooper, Mike Davis, Slavenka Drakulić, Robert Dreyfuss, Susan Faludi, Liza Featherstone, Thomas Ferguson, Doug Henwood, Max Holland, Molly Ivins, John Leonard, Michael Moore, Richard Pollak, Joel Rogers, Kirkpatrick Sale, Robert Scheer, Herman Schwartz, Ted Solotaroff, Edward Sorel, Gore Vidal, Jon Wiener, Amy Wilentz, Art Winslow

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The Real Story in Boston

Everyone agrees. The story is that there is no story. The candidates have already been chosen. The platform has been written to avoid controversy. That's why the early focus has been on the sideshows (since everyone knows that politicians get booed at baseball games, was it wise of Kerry to throw that first ball? What will Teresa Heinz Kerry say next?).

So here's the story behind the story.

There are, first of all, the delegates, who this year are virtually all voting the way they are told to vote (and for the most part *want* to vote, because they want to beat Bush). Then there are the 15,000 mainstream journalists who outnumber the delegates three to one, who are, as the phrase goes, stenographers to power. Both these groups are partakers of the conventional convention wisdom: that because polls show Kerry does better among those who know him, the goal of this convention is to tell his story. (And, his group of a dozen political strategists who meet daily would add, in the words of consultant John Martilla, "to make sure that prominent in the narrative is his ability to handle issues of national security.")

Next are the sponsors—Union Pacific, MassMutual, Edison International, BellSouth and all the rest, including the liquor and food companies—who pay for the countless receptions, at which delegates and the press consume gallons of booze and tons of sumptuous hors d'oeuvres as they talk to one another about the evil influence of big money on politics. I myself consumed more than my share of such complimentaries at the moving reception honoring Senator George McGovern (attended by former candidates Mondale and Dukakis), courtesy of Ocean Spray Products.

And finally there are the dissenters, and they are where they are—at the center of what should be the debate but on the fringes of the convention.

In the absence of any official joining of such issues as the war on Iraq, globalization, the death penalty and media concentration, all these player-constituencies carry on doing what they do best.

My sense, for example, is that in almost every state delegation a mini drama is being played out over the transfer of power to the next generation. In New York, if Attorney General Eliot Spitzer runs for governor, Mark Green, Andrew Cuomo and perhaps Robert Kennedy Jr., among others, are in line to run for attorney general. When I asked Mark about this and what sort of politicking one could do at the convention, all he said was, "Look and you will see any number of us taking down names of people to talk to later. We're keeping lists like a prosecutor at a Mafia wedding."

On Monday I went to an ADA lunch, where one of the speakers was Representative Barney Frank, as outrageously witty as ever ("If my Hebrew was better, I'd say Kaddish for moderate Republicanism") and as on-message as everyone else: There were, he said, two models for transforming the Democratic Party in a progressive direction—the Nader-outsider model (many boos) and the Jesse-Jackson-enter-the-Democratic-primary model. He explained that "our role is to carry on that fight, and the way to get there is to follow the Jesse model." But the backstory to Frank's convention was that if Kerry wins the presidency, Barney (along with Edward Markey and a half-

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dozen others) will be running for the Senate. Go Barney!

The big-shot journos, having not that much to say about the politicos, did have some interesting things to say about each other. At this year's Shorenstein Center brunch, anchors Tom Brokaw, Peter Jennings and Dan Rather, along with PBS's Jim Lehrer and CNN's Judy Woodruff, got in a set-to about whether it was a good or a bad thing that the Big Three networks were limiting coverage of this year's convention to an hour a night. To me, the most interesting moment came when Nolan Bowie, a Shorenstein fellow, asked why they thought so many young people say they get their news from Jon Stewart's *The Daily Show* rather than network nightly news. The panel mistakenly used the question as a jumping-off point to speculate on whether the kids knew the difference between satire and the real thing and how the nightly news could be adjusted to appeal to the younger viewers.

I thought the panel missed the point. Kids watch Stewart because he is very funny but also because he openly frames the news and shows his contempt for hypocrisy, sham and cant, whereas the anchors, in thrall to the convention of narrative neutrality (which confuses moderation of tone with objectivity), pretend to have no views of their own. There was much talk about bias and the "L" (for liberal) word but no talk about the "A" (for authenticity) word.

And finally, there was the convention outside the convention—in the streets and in various venues around town. At one of these events, I ran into the Reverend Jackson, and since I had just seen his picture on various front pages smiling alongside George W. Bush, I asked him what that was all about. He told me, "I asked the President one question: Did he intend to enforce the law so that every vote counted? And he said he'd get back to me." Jesse said he'd heard nothing and that he'd get me a copy of his follow-up letter—which he did when I ran into him the next afternoon at a forum ("The Case for a Right-to-Vote Constitutional Amendment") co-sponsored by *The Nation* and moderated by John Nichols. The letter requested a meeting with the President to discuss guaranteeing the "integrity and protection" of the voting process. At the forum, Jesse's son, Congressman Jesse Jackson Jr., spoke eloquently: "If I had a big piece of yellow ribbon, I would wrap it around the state of Florida and declare it a crime scene."

So maybe the story behind the story of this convention has to do with the next generation after all. And I haven't even mentioned Barack Obama, the US Senate candidate from Illinois who electrified the convention Tuesday night (and whom Studs Terkel thinks may one day be President). VICTOR NAVASKY

A Social Occasion

When organizers were planning the Boston Social Forum, they envisioned a gathering that would counter the Democratic National Convention in every way. Whereas the DNC would be a tightly scripted and essentially private affair (locals refer to the convention's site, the FleetCenter, as the Fleece Center), the BSF would be open and democratic, a three-day festival of ideas held on the campus of UMass Boston, the city's only truly public university.

And indeed, for the estimated 5,000 activists from across New England who took over the campus (including hundreds of young people, who were participating in a concurrent Active Arts Youth Conference), the event was a valuable chance to congregate and "put forward their best ideas and analysis in a convivial environment," as coordinator Jason Pramas put it.

But if the BSF bore little resemblance to the official Democratic gathering just five miles away, neither did it look much like Boston—a majority nonwhite city—or even UMass Boston, often the first step for working-class and immigrant students in search of a toehold in the middle class. There was little sign of the exciting new alliance between African-Americans and Latinos that is beginning to reshape local politics, and save for SEIU, which brought leaders as well as members, the only union presence belonged to the police, hundreds of whom were using the campus as a staging ground for the DNC.

"It reminds me of a Grateful Dead show, but without the music or the drugs," was how one attendee put it. He meant that in the best possible way: "This is a place for people who don't fit in," said the man, who works in the health insurance industry in Connecticut and would prefer that his activism remain a secret from his co-workers. "People who have been left out, who aren't part of the 9-to-5 world, who don't have pensions or 401(k)s, they can come here and be part of something." That's a worthy sentiment—but a far cry from the vision behind the first such gathering in Brazil, in 2001, which sought to create not a political lonely-hearts club but a summit of powerful and emerging social movements that could serve as a counterweight to the World Economic Forum in Davos and begin to outline the parameters of the oft-touted "another world." Any such event in the United States faces a monumental challenge in that our social movements, by contrast, are small and struggling.

Before the last flip chart had been folded and put away, the debate about organizing the next gathering—a US social forum—

NATION NOTES

It is rare enough when a book of poetry appears on the *New York Times* Best Seller List, but when it is by *The Nation*'s own Deadline Poet, Calvin Trillin, attention must be paid. On the July 25 nonfiction list Trillin's *Obliviously On He Sails* (Random House), containing poems first published in this magazine, is number ten and gaining on number nine, Bob Woodward's *Plan of Attack*. Like Woodward, Trillin exposes the secret doings of the Bush Administration, as in the opus that begins, "One mystery I've tried to disentangle:/Why Cheney's head is always at an angle." The solution, in the final couplet: "The code is broken, after years of trying/He only cocks his head when he is lying." The source of the book's title, readers may recall, is Trillin's poem inspired by the release of Bush's college transcript: "Obliviously on he sails/With marks not quite as good as Quayle's." Sail on, O Bud!

* * *

ON THE WEB: *Nation* contributors, columnists and regular bloggers were out in force at the Democratic National Convention. If you missed any of their reports, you can still read them at www.thenation.com.

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COMMENT

was under way. Proponents are eager to stage an event that will draw activists from around the country. But cautionary voices maintain that to be effective, a national forum must have serious participation by institutions, including trade unions and other membership organizations. "We see the forums as places for our members to grow in their consciousness," says Jojo Geronimo, SEIU's education director for the eastern region. "But we need an action plan as well. What are we going to do after the forum?" he asks. "Let's institutionalize the process, say that each of us will talk to our membership or our leadership about our goals. A lot of analysis was done here, but from analysis we need to go to action."

JENNIFER BERKSHIRE

Jennifer Berkshire is a writer living in Boston. See her dispatches from the Boston Social Forum at www.thenation.com.

The 9/11 Report

While George W. Bush has been President, we've had two of the biggest intelligence screw-ups in US history. The intelligence community overstated the weapons of mass destruction threat posed by Iraq (and Bush overstated the exaggerations), and the national security and law enforcement systems failed to detect and thwart the horrific attacks of September 11, 2001. In response to each of those tragic mistakes, Bush did nothing to discover what had gone wrong. He called for no accountability, no reviews, no investigations, no changes. For more than a year after the attacks, his Administration opposed the creation of an independent bipartisan commission to examine what happened on and before 9/11. Even after chief WMD hunter David Kay declared earlier this year that he had found no unconventional weapons in Iraq, Bush resisted establishing a body to review the prewar intelligence. He eventually yielded, but created a commission to study WMD-related intelligence issues that is made up only of people handpicked by the White House. And it is unclear whether they are examining the prewar use—or abuse—of the intelligence by the White House.

Bush has shown a profound lack of curiosity about these intelligence failures. And the final report of the 9/11 commission illustrates why he was uninterested—or escapist. Although the report declares, "Our aim has not been to assign individual blame," it does cite errors and negligent policy-making of both the Bush II and Clinton administrations. And it contains bad news specifically for the man who's up for re-election in November.

The report shows that the Al Qaeda threat was not on the White House A-list. For instance, according to the commission, just days into the Bush Administration, Richard Clarke, the chief counterterrorism coordinator, sent National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice a memo asking for a senior-level review "to decide whether al Qaeda was 'a first order threat' or a more modest worry being overblown by 'chicken little' alarmists." (Clarke took the dire view.) The commission notes that Rice "did not respond directly to Clarke's memorandum. No Principals Committee meeting on al Qaeda was held until September 4, 2001 (although the Principals Committee met frequently on other subjects, such as the Middle East peace process, Russia and the Persian Gulf)." The report details the many steps the Bush Administration took in its first eight months to establish an Al Qaeda counterterrorism policy. But counterterrorism was not on the fast track. Even when the Administration eventually finalized a "three-phase, multi-year plan to pressure and perhaps ultimately topple the Taliban leadership"—on September 10, 2001—the plan was not ready to be implemented and there was no funding for it.

Is it fair to blame the Bush crowd for not having done more before 9/11? In a way, yes. The Administration can be faulted for setting the wrong priorities. Bush and his lot said missile defense was a top need because a missile attack from a rogue state was a top threat (despite the fact that intelligence analysts concluded otherwise). Well, they got that wrong.

The report also notes that Bush and his aides largely neglected to take seriously the possibility that Al Qaeda aimed to strike in the United States—although there were signs that a domestic attack could occur. When the acting FBI director told Attorney General Ashcroft that Al Qaeda might strike the nation directly, Ashcroft assumed the FBI was on the case and made no further inquiries. Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz dismissed the Al Qaeda threat. And Bush ordered nothing to be done after receiving that now-famous intelligence briefing on August 6, 2001, titled, "Bin Ladin Determined To Strike in US." He told the commission this report was merely "historical." But that was disingenuous; the briefing highlighted "patterns of suspicious activity in this country consistent with preparations for hijackings or other types of attacks." The commission notes that the CIA and FBI missed several chances to disrupt the plot.

The final report also reaffirms previous commission conclusions that undermine Bush's rationale for the Iraq war—most notably that there's no evidence that Saddam and Al Qaeda developed "a collaborative operational relationship." It also includes the most

(Continued on Page 30)

CALVIN TRILLIN

A White House Response To the 9/11 Commission's Finding That Iran Had More Contact With the Hijackers Than Iraq Did

The little error that we may have made
In picking out a country to invade
Was understandable. The names, of course,
Are close, and when you make a show of force
The choice of countries needn't be clear-cut.
We simply had to kick some Muslim butt.

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JONATHAN SCHELL

Strong and Wrong

"During the Vietnam War, many young men, including the current President, the Vice President and me, could have gone to Vietnam and didn't. John Kerry came from a privileged background. He could have avoided going, too. But instead he said, 'Send me.'

"When they sent those Swift Boats up the river in Vietnam... John Kerry said, 'Send me.'

"And then when America needed to extricate itself from that misbegotten and disastrous war, Kerry donned his uniform once again, and said, 'Send me'; and he led veterans to an encampment on the Washington Mall, where, in defiance of the Nixon Justice Department, they conducted the most stirring and effective of the protests, that forced an end to the war.

"And then, on my watch, when it was time to heal the wounds of war and normalize relations with Vietnam...John Kerry said, 'Send me.'"

So spoke President Clinton at the Democratic convention—except that he did not deliver the third paragraph about Kerry's protest; I made that up. The speech cries out for the inclusion of Kerry's glorious moment of antiwar leadership; and its absence is as palpable as one of those erasures from photographs of high Soviet officials after Stalin had sent them to the gulag. Clinton's message was plain. Military courage in war is honored; civil courage in opposing a disastrous war is not honored. Even thirty years later, it cannot be mentioned by a former President who himself opposed the Vietnam War. The political rule, as Clinton once put it in one of the few pithy things he has ever said, "We [Democrats] have got to be strong.... When people feel uncertain, they'd rather have somebody who's strong and wrong than somebody who's weak and right."

And now the United States is engaged in a war fully as wrong as the one in Vietnam. The boiling core of American politics today is the war in Iraq and all its horrors: the continuing airstrikes on populated cities; the dogs loosed by American guards on naked, bound Iraqi prisoners; the kidnappings and the beheadings; the American casualties nearing a thousand; the 10,000 or more Iraqi casualties; the occupation hidden behind the mask of an entirely fictitious Iraqi "sovereignty"; the growing scrapheap of discredited justifications for the war. But little of that is mentioned these days by the Democrats. The great majority of Democratic voters, according to polls, ardently oppose the war, yet by embracing the candidacy of John Kerry, who voted for the Congressional resolution authorizing the war and now wants to increase the number of American troops in Iraq, the party has made what appears to be a tactical decision to hide its faith.

The strong and wrong position won out in the Democratic Party when its voters chose Kerry over Howard Dean in the Iowa caucuses and the New Hampshire primary. An antiwar party rallied around a prowar candidate. The result has been one of the most peculiar political atmospheres within a party in recent memory. The Democrats are united but have concealed the cause that unites them. The party champions free speech that it does not practice. As a Dennis Kucinich delegate at the convention said to Amy Goodman on *Democracy Now!*, "Peace" is "off-message." A haze of vagueness and generality hangs over party pronouncements. In his convention speech, President Carter, who is on record opposing the war, spoke against "pre-emptive war" but did not specify which pre-emptive war he had in mind. Al Gore, who has been wonderfully eloquent in his opposition to the war, was tame for the occasion. "Regardless of your opinion at the beginning of this war," he said, "isn't it now abundantly obvious that the way this war has been managed by the Administration has gotten us into very serious trouble?"

What of the antiwar sentiment that is still in truth at the heart of most Democrats' anger? It has been displaced downward and outward, into the outlying precincts of American politics. The political class as a whole has proved incapable of taking responsibility for the future of the nation, and the education of the American public has been left to those without hope of office. Like a balloon that squeezed at the top expands at the base, opposition to the war increases the farther you get from John Kerry. Carter and Gore can express a little more of it. Howard Dean, who infused the party with its now-muffled antiwar passion, can express more still. Representative Kucinich, a full-throated peace candidate, has endorsed Kerry and has kind words to say about him but holds fast to his antiwar position. On the Internet, Tomdispatch.com, AlterNet.org, commondreams.org, antiwar.com, MoveOn.org and many others are buzzing and bubbling with honest and inspired reporting and commentary. Michael Moore is packing audiences into 2,000 theaters to see *Fahrenheit 9/11*.

I know, I know: It's essential to remove George W. Bush from the White House, and Kerry is the instrument at hand. I fully share this sentiment. But I am not running for anything, and my job is not to carry water for any party but to stand as far apart from the magnetic field of power as I can and tell the truth as I see it. And it's not too early to worry about the dangers posed by the Democrats' strategy. In the first place, they have staked their future and the country's on a political calculation, but it may be wrong. By suffocating their own passion, they may lose the energy that has brought them this far. They have confronted Bush's policy of denial with a politics of avoidance. Bush is adamant in error; they are feeble in dedication to truth. If strong and wrong is really the winning formula, Bush may be the public's choice. In the second place, if Kerry does win, he will inherit the war wedded to a potentially disastrous strategy. If he tries to change course, Republicans—and hawkish Democrats (Senator Joe Lieberman has just joined in a revival of the Committee on the Present Danger)—will not fail to remind him of his commitment to stay the course and renew the charge of flip-flopping. But the course, as retired Gen. Anthony Zinni has commented, may take the country over Niagara Falls. Then Kerry may wish that he and his admirers at this year's convention had thought to place a higher value on his service to his country when he opposed the Vietnam War.

Jonathan Schell, the Nation Institute's Harold Willens Peace Fellow, is the author, most recently, of A Hole in the World.

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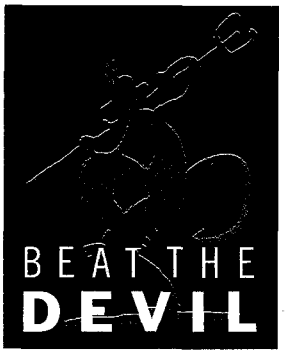
ALEXANDER COCKBURN

He's the (Any)One



Can someone win the presidency entirely on the basis of a negative asset? I wouldn't have thought so, but here's John Kerry, three months shy of election day, promoting himself as a man of presidential caliber entirely on the basis that he's the Anyone in "Anyone But Bush." Come next January the Anyone behind the desk in the Oval Office may be a bit taller. There'll be medals on the bookshelf showing he killed Vietnamese in the service of his country. As for the policy furnishings, most everything else will stay the same. Kerry's been pretty clear about that, letting his core constituencies know that as President Anyone he's not going to cut them any favors.

The nation's hungry, its underemployed, its jobless? In April Kerry announced that his economic strategy will be to wage war on the deficit, which means he'll do nothing to alleviate problem number one in America today—the lack of jobs and the rotten pay for those lucky enough to have some form of work.

Women? Kerry, the man who voted for Bill Clinton's savage assault, labeled "welfare reform," on poor women, said he might well appoint antiabortion judges, adding magnanimously that he wouldn't want such appointments to lead to the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*.

Kerry vows to put more cops on the streets, and there'll be no intermission in the War on Drugs, which has played a large part in producing the memorable statistic issued by the Justice Department in late July, to the effect that the number of people caught in the toils of the criminal justice system grew by 130,700 last year. The grand total is now nearly 6.9 million either in jail, in prison, on probation or on parole, amounting to 3.2 percent of the adult population of the United States. In many cities a young black man faces a far better chance of getting locked up than of getting a job, since the lockup is the definitive bipartisan response of both Democrats and Republicans to the theories of John Maynard Keynes. Blacks have got less than nothing from Kerry, aside from his wife's declaration that she too is an African-American; yet the Congressional Black Caucus cheers the man who voted for welfare reform and devotes its time to flaying Ralph Nader.

The "Anyone But" strategy favored by most pwogs means that Kerry has never had his feet held to the fire by any faction of the Democratic Party. This has been the year of surrendering quietly.

War in Iraq? A majority of the country wants out, certainly most Democrats. Kerry wants in, even more than Bush. When the DNC told Kucinich to stuff his peace plank, Kucinich tugged his forelock and told his followers to shuffle back in under the Big Tent and help elect a man who pledges to fight the war in Iraq better and longer than Bush. Feminist leaders kept their mouths shut when Kerry flew his kite about nominating antichoice judges. Gay leaders didn't move their lips to utter so much as a squeak when Kerry declared his opposition to same-sex marriage. Did we hear from Norman Lear and People for the American Way as Kerry, the man who voted for the Patriot Act, revived his Tipper Gore–ish posturing about the evils of popular culture? Of course we didn't, even though Kerry voted for the unconstitutional Communications Decency Act, a piece of legislation that even the prudish Joe Lieberman couldn't stomach.

Kerry told James Hoffa of the Teamsters in February that he wouldn't touch the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge but elsewhere would "drill like never before." There wasn't a bleat from the big environmental groups. He pledged the same policy again to the American Gas Association in June, throwing in the prospect of a new trans-Alaska-Canada pipeline for natural gas from the Arctic. Once again the big environmental groups held their tongues.

True, Andy Stern, head of the Service Employees International Union, threw a gobbet of red meat onto the convention floor by confiding to the *Washington Post*'s David Broder that another four years of Bush might be less damaging than the stifling of needed reform within the party and the labor movement that would occur if Kerry becomes President. After a couple of hours of being forced to stand on a milk crate with a copy of the party platform over his head and electrodes attached to his penis, Stern recanted and said he was "a hundred percent" for Kerry. Thus ended labor's great revolt against a candidate who's cast his share of votes in the Senate to insure job flight from America and whose commitment to the living standards of working people is aptly resumed in his pledge to raise the minimum wage to $7 an hour by 2007, which would be far below what its purchasing power was in 1968.

Contrast the lib-pwog refusal to raise any sort of trouble with the robust comment of the conservative organizer Paul Weyrich, who recently remarked, "For all their brilliance...Mehlman and Karl Rove...made a very serious mistake with this [Republican] Convention's line-up. It is one that the rank and file should not tolerate. If the President is embarrassed to be seen with conservatives at the Convention, maybe conservatives will be embarrassed to be seen with the President on Election Day."

For all the interminable thundering about the evils of George Bush, the man has done a very useful job of sabotaging the American Empire, which is probably why so many liberals hate him. They think he's a national embarrassment, hurling Imperial America over his handlebars, landing on its ass amid world derision. But as Gabriel Kolko remarks in his contribution to *Dime's Worth of Difference;* the new collection edited by Jeffrey St. Clair and myself (details on our *CounterPunch* website): "The United States will be more prudent, and the world will be far safer, only if it is constrained by a lack of allies and isolated. And that is happening.... Inadvertently, the Bush Administration has begun to destroy an alliance system that for the world's peace should have been abolished long ago. The Democrats are far less likely to continue that process.... As dangerous as he is, Bush's reelection is much more likely to produce the continued destruction of the alliance system that is so crucial to American power in the long run." ■

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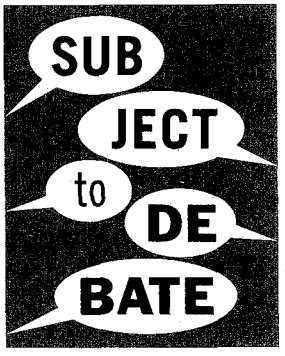
KATHA POLLITT

Let's Not Devalue Ourselves



It says something about the iron grip of the culture wars on our politics that no less a liberal than John Kerry—with his 100 percent ratings from NARAL, Human Rights Campaign, the AFL-CIO and the NAACP—recently claimed that he represents "conservative values." There may even be a sense in which that's true. "Values" is one of those bland, spongy, good-for-you words that are the verbal equivalent of tofu: It means whatever you want it to mean. As for "conservative," in certain key states that's a synonym for "not a crazy hippie," and by that definition Kerry undoubtedly qualifies. Values, even conservative values, don't have to mean the three G's (God, guns and gays) or the four A's (antiabortion, abstinence, antifeminist and anti–affirmative action), either.

In any case, the reason Kerry's so concerned about values has a lot to do with the unfairness of the Electoral College, which awards outrageously disproportionate political power to rural conservative states with fewer voters than, say, the enlightened borough of Brooklyn. Through one of those ironies with which history is so replete, the Electoral College, intended by the Founding Fathers to insure that the President was chosen by the ruling elite, has become an antidemocratic mechanism of quite another kind, giving unequal weight to votes based merely on the state in which they are cast. (How unequal? A vote from Wyoming counts almost four times as much as a vote from California.) In a country that actually practiced the principle of one person, one vote, the political landscape would be markedly different: Every vote in a presidential election would be campaigned for—the Texas liberal and the Massachusetts right-winger—and candidates would have to address the issues important to the largest number of people instead of pampering the vanity of tiny demographic slivers favored by geography. Candidates would have to wrestle with the fact that most Americans are not family farmers, that 43 percent seldom or never go to church, that one in four is nonwhite. We wouldn't obsess over swing voters in Ohio—what, they still haven't made up their minds? they've had four years!—and Thomas Frank's fascinating analysis of the growth of the right in the so-called heartland, *What's the Matter With Kansas?* would be a curiosity, not required reading.

Given the current system—which will never change, because the small states would have to approve a constitutional amendment and why would they do that?—Kansas matters, and Kansans care about values. As political currency, "values" may be, as Frank argues, counterfeit coinage in which working-class and lower-middle-class red staters are paid to forgo their economic and social interests in favor of the pleasures of moral superiority over the Sodom and Gomorrah that are the blue states. (Illusory moral superiority, I might add, when you consider that rates of divorce, teen pregnancy and out-of-wedlock childbearing are higher in the Bible Belt than in the latté-sipping, sushi-nibbling Northeast.)

The usual Democratic response in the values debate is either to change the subject—"It's the economy, stupid"—or concede the high ground. Thus, Randall Balmer, professor of religion at Barnard and an evangelical Christian, urged Kerry in a recent *Nation* piece to stress his personal opposition to abortion and his commitment to making abortion, as Clinton put it, "safe, legal and rare." This may be the only time in *The Nation*'s 139-year history that a candidate followed its advice—interviewed on *Larry King Live*, Kerry not only said abortion should be "rare, but safe and legal"; he said he wanted to talk about "morality, responsibility, adoption, and other choices." In other words, anti-choicers are right: Abortion is bad, women are insufficiently thoughtful about it and they should feel even worse about choosing abortion than they already do. This from the man who hopes to win the single-woman vote!

It is a mistake to give the right a monopoly on values by agreeing with them in a half-baked, yes-but, wishy-washy way. Sure, abortion should be rare—but it should be rare thanks to birth control and support for women and children, not because women guilt-trip themselves into continuing crisis pregnancies. It's not a satisfying answer, either, to change the subject, as when Kerry said that "good-paying jobs" is a Democratic value. People need to hear about those good jobs, but they also need to hear about a social vision that isn't just about their own immediate self-interest.

We liberals and progressives and leftists have our own noble principles, our own beautiful abstract words. We should take our stand on them. Fairness is a liberal value. Equality is a liberal value. Education is a liberal value. Honesty in government, public service for modest remuneration, safeguarding public resources and the land—these are all values we share. Liberty is a liberal value, trusting people to make their own decisions, letting people speak their minds even if their views are unpopular. So is social solidarity, the belief that we should share the nation's enormous wealth so that everyone can live decently. The truth is, most of the good things about this country have been fought for by liberals (indeed, by leftists and, dare one say it, Communists)—women's rights, civil liberties, the end of legal segregation, freedom of religion, the social safety net, unions, workers' rights, consumer protection, international cooperation, resistance to corporate domination—and resisted by conservatives. If conservatives had carried the day, blacks would still be in the back of the bus, women would be barefoot and pregnant, medical care would be on a cash-only basis, there'd be mouse feet in your breakfast cereal and workers would still be sleeping next to their machines.

Of course, it won't be easy for Kerry to make these points, even if he wants to. For one thing, it's hard to run as an economic populist when corporate donors are paying your bills. For another, a lot of those precious swing voters have strong conservative views—it's often a mistake to think people who disagree with you really don't, deep down. For a third, there's Iraq, a subject on which Kerry has yet to present a clear and coherent position.

Still, in the war over values, we needn't be shy. Liberty, Equality, Fraternity—it has a certain ring to it, don't you think? ■

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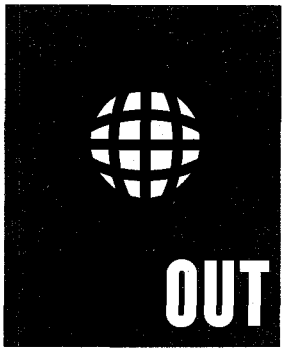
NAOMI KLEIN

Ditch the Distraction in Chief

Last month, I reluctantly joined the Anybody But Bush camp. It was "Bush in a Box" that finally got me, a gag gift my brother gave my father on his sixty-sixth birthday. Bush in a Box is a cardboard cutout of President 43 with a set of adhesive speech balloons featuring the usual Bushisms: "Is our children learning?" "They misunderestimated me"—standard-issue Bush-bashing schlock, on sale at Wal-Mart, made in Malaysia.



Yet Bush in a Box filled me with despair. It's not that the President is dumb, which I already knew; it's that he makes us dumb. Don't get me wrong: My brother is an exceptionally bright guy; he heads a think tank that publishes weighty policy papers on the failings of export-oriented resource extraction and the false savings of cuts to welfare. Whenever I have a question involving interest rates or currency boards, he's my first call. But Bush in a Box pretty much summarizes the level of analysis coming from the left these days. You know the line: The White House has been hijacked by a shady gang of zealots who are either insane or stupid or both. Vote Kerry and return the country to sanity.

But the zealots in Bush's White House are neither insane nor stupid nor particularly shady. Rather, they openly serve the interests of the corporations that put them in office with bloody-minded efficiency. Their boldness stems not from the fact that they are a new breed of zealot but that the old breed finds itself in a newly unconstrained political climate.

We know this, yet there is something about George W. Bush's combination of ignorance, piety and swagger that triggers a condition in progressives I've come to think of as Bush Blindness. When it strikes, it causes us to lose sight of everything we know about politics, economics and history and to focus exclusively on the admittedly odd personalities of the people in the White House. Other side effects include delighting in psychologists' diagnoses of Bush's warped relationship with his father and brisk sales of Bush "dum gum"—$1.25.

This madness has to stop, and the fastest way of doing that is to elect John Kerry, not because he will be different but because in most key areas—Iraq, the "war on drugs," Israel/Palestine, free trade, corporate taxes—he will be just as bad. The main difference will be that as Kerry pursues these brutal policies, he will come off as intelligent, sane and blissfully dull. That's why I've joined the Anybody But Bush camp: Only with a bore like Kerry at the helm will we finally be able to put an end to the presidential pathologizing and focus on the issues again.

Most *Nation* readers are already solidly in the Anybody But Bush camp, convinced that now is not the time to point out the similarities between the two corporate-controlled parties. I disagree: We need to face up to those disappointing similarities, and then we need to ask ourselves whether we have a better chance of fighting a corporate agenda pushed by Kerry or by Bush.

I have no illusions that the left will have "access" to a Kerry/Edwards White House. But it's worth remembering that it was under Bill Clinton that progressive movements in the West began to turn our attention to systems again: corporate globalization, even—*gasp*—capitalism and colonialism. We began to understand modern empire not as the purview of a single nation, no matter how powerful, but a global system of interlocking states, international institutions and corporations, an understanding that allowed us to build global networks in response, from the World Social Forum to Indymedia. Innocuous leaders who spout liberal platitudes while slashing welfare and privatizing the planet push us to better identify those systems and to build movements agile and intelligent enough to confront them. With Mr. Dum Gum out of the White House, progressives will have to get smart again, and that can only be good.

Some are arguing that Bush's extremism actually has a progressive effect because it unites the world against US empire. But a world united against the United States isn't necessarily united against imperialism. Despite their rhetoric, France and Russia opposed the invasion of Iraq because it threatened their own plans to control Iraq's oil. With Kerry in power, European leaders will no longer be able to hide their imperial designs behind easy Bush-bashing, a development already forecast in Kerry's odious Iraq policy. Kerry argues that we need to give "our friends and allies... a meaningful voice and role in Iraqi affairs," including "fair access to the multibillion-dollar reconstruction contracts. It also means letting them be a part of putting Iraq's profitable oil industry back together." Yes, that's right: Iraq's problems will be solved with more foreign invaders, with France and Germany given a greater "voice" and a bigger share of the spoils of war. No mention is made of Iraqis, and their right to a "meaningful voice" in the running of their own country, let alone of their right to control their oil or to get a piece of the reconstruction.

Under a Kerry government, the comforting illusion of a world united against imperial aggression will drop away, exposing the jockeying for power that is the true face of modern empire. We'll also have to let go of the archaic idea that toppling a single man, or a Romanesque "empire," will solve all, let alone any, of our problems. Yes, it will make for more complicated politics, but it has the added benefit of being true. With Bush out of the picture, we lose the galvanizing enemy, but we get to take on the actual policies that are transforming all of our countries.

The other day, I was ranting to a friend at *The Nation* about Kerry's vicious support for the apartheid wall in Israel, his gratuitous attacks on Hugo Chávez in Venezuela and his abysmal record on free trade. "Yeah," he agreed sadly. "But at least he believes in evolution."

So do I—the much-needed evolution of our progressive movements. And that won't happen until we put away the fridge magnets and Bush gags and get serious. And that will only happen once we get rid of the distraction in chief.

So Anybody But Bush. And then let's get back to work. ■

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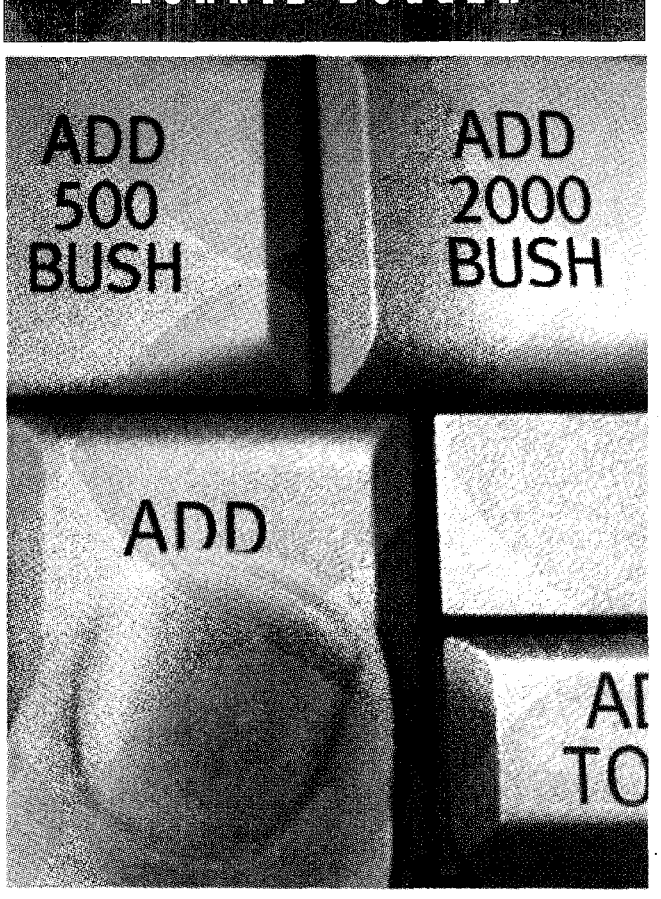
ARTICLES

HOW THEY COULD STEAL THE ELECTION THIS TIME

by RONNIE DUGGER



On November 2 millions of Americans will cast their votes for President in computerized voting systems that can be rigged by corporate or local-election insiders. Some 98 million citizens, five out of every six of the roughly 115 million who will go to the polls, will consign their votes into computers that unidentified computer programmers, working in the main for four private corporations and the officials of 10,500 election jurisdictions, could program to invisibly falsify the outcomes.

The result could be the failure of an American presidential election and its collapse into suspicions, accusations and a civic fury that will make Florida 2000 seem like a family spat in the kitchen. Robert Reich, Bill Clinton's Labor Secretary, has written, "Automated voting machines will be easily rigged, with no paper trails to document abuses." Senator John Kerry told Florida Democrats last March, "I don't think we ought to have any vote cast in America that cannot be traced and properly recounted." Pointing out in a recent speech at the NAACP convention that "a million African-Americans were disenfranchised in the last election," Kerry says his campaign is readying 2,000 lawyers to "challenge any place in America where you cannot trace the vote and count the votes" [see Greg Palast, "Vanishing Votes," May 17].

The potential for fraud and error is daunting. About 61 million of the votes in November, more than half the total, will be counted in the computers of one company, the privately held Election Systems and Software (ES&S) of Omaha, Nebraska. Altogether, nearly 100 million votes will be counted in computers provided and programmed by ES&S and three other private corporations: British-owned Sequoia Voting Systems of Oakland, California, whose touch-screen voting equipment was rejected as insecure against fraud by New York City in the 1990s; the Republican-identified company Diebold Election Systems of McKinney, Texas, whose machines malfunctioned this year in a California election; and Hart InterCivic of Austin, one of whose principal investors is Tom Hicks, who helped make George W. Bush a millionaire.

About a third of the votes, 36 million, will be tabulated completely inside the new paperless, direct-recording-electronic (DRE) voting systems, on which you vote directly on a touch-screen. Unlike receipted transactions at the neighborhood ATM, however, you get no paper record of your vote. Since, as a government expert says, "the ballot is embedded in the voting equipment," there is no voter-marked paper ballot to be counted or recounted. Voting on the DRE, you never know, despite what the touch-screen says, whether the computer is counting your vote as you think you are casting it or, either by error or fraud, it is giving it to another candidate. No one can tell what a computer does inside itself by looking at it; an election official "can't watch the bits inside," says Dr. Peter Neumann, the principal scientist at the Computer Science Laboratory of SRI International and a world authority on computer-based risks.

The four major election corporations count votes with voting-system source codes. These are kept strictly secret by contract with the local jurisdictions and states using the machines. That secrecy makes it next to impossible for a candidate to examine the source code used to tabulate his or her own contest. In computer jargon a "trapdoor" is an opening in the code through which the program can be corrupted. David Stutsman, an Indiana lawyer whose suits in the 1980s exposed a trapdoor that was being used by the nation's largest election

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company at that time, puts it well: "The secrecy of the ballot has been turned into the secrecy of the vote count."

According to Dr. David Dill, professor of computer science at Stanford, all elections conducted on DREs "are open to question." Challenging those who belittle the danger of fraud, Dill says that with trillions of dollars at stake in the battle for control of Congress and the presidency, potential attackers who might seek to fix elections include "hackers, candidates, zealots, foreign governments and criminal organizations," and "local officials can't stop it."

Last fall during a public talk on "The Voting Machine War" for advanced computer-science students at Stanford, Dill asked, "Why am I always being asked to prove these systems aren't secure? The burden of proof ought to be on the vendor. You ask about the hardware. 'Secret.' The software? 'Secret.' What's the cryptography? 'Can't tell you because that'll compromise the secrecy of the machines.'... Federal testing procedures? 'Secret'! Results of the tests? 'Secret'! Basically we are required to have blind faith."

The integrity of the vote-counting inside DREs depends on audit logs and reports they print out, but as Neumann says, these are "not real audit trails" because they are themselves riggable. The DREs randomly store three to seven complete sets of alleged duplicates of each voter's ballot, and sets of these images can be printed out after the election and manually counted. The companies claim that satisfies the requirement in the 2002 Help America Vote Act (HAVA) that "a manual audit capacity" must be available. But as informed computer scientists unanimously agree, if the first set of ballot images is corrupted, they all are. I asked Robert Boram, the chief engineer who invented a DRE sold by the RF Shoup voting-systems company, if he could rig his DRE's three sets of ballot images. "Give me a month," he replied.

The United States therefore faces the likelihood that about three out of ten of the votes in the national election this November will be unverifiable, unauditable and unrecountable. The private election companies and local and state election officials, when required to carry out recounts of elections conducted inside the DREs, will order the computers to spit out second printouts of the vote totals and the computers' wholly electronic, fakable "audit trail." The companies and most of the election officials will then tell the voters that the second printouts are "recounts" that prove the vote-counting was "100 percent accurate," even though a second printout is not a recount.

HAVA was supposed to solve election problems revealed in 2000; instead, it has made the situation worse. Under the act the Election Assistance Commission (EAC), appointed by President Bush, is supposed to set standards for the vote-counting process, but four months before the election the new agency had only seven full-time staff members. On June 17 the EAC sent $861 million to twenty-five states, mainly to buy computerized machines for which no new technical standards have been set. Its just-appointed fifteen-member technical standards committee does not include more than one leading critic of computerized vote-counting.

Rather than completely testing the vote-counting codes, there is some secretive testing of systems by three private companies that are chosen by the pro-voting-business National Association of State Election Directors. The companies consult obsolete pro-company and completely voluntary standards promulgated by the Federal Election Commission and get paid by the very companies whose equipment is being tested. The three private companies, speciously called Independent Testing Authorities, together constitute a Potemkin village to falsely assure the states and the voters of the security of the systems. Often their work is misrepresented as "federal testing." The states then test and "certify" the systems, and the local jurisdictions put on dog-and-pony-show "logic and accuracy tests," which are not capable of discovering hidden codes that would change vote totals.

"The system is much more out of control than anyone here may be willing to admit," Dr. Michael Shamos, a computer scientist at Carnegie-Mellon University and for many years an examiner of voting machines for Texas and Pennsylvania, told a House panel on June 24. "There's virtually no control over how software enters a voting machine." Shamos told another House panel on July 20, "There are no adequate standards for voting machines, nor any effective testing protocols."

Hackable computer codes control vote-counting in all three kinds of computerized systems that will be used again in the 2004 elections: the ballotless DREs, on which some 36 million will vote; optical-scan systems that electronically tally paper ballots marked by the voters, on which 40 million people will vote; and punch-card ballots, also tabulated by computerized card-readers, which gained notoriety in 2000 and are still used by 22 million voters. (Another 16 million still vote on the old lever machines, about a million on hand-counted paper ballots.)

Florida 2000 was universally misunderstood and mischaracterized in the press as a crisis of hanging chads on the punch-card ballots. The serious issue, then as now, was embodied in the explicit though all but unreported position that James Baker, George W. Bush's field commander in Florida, staked out to stop the recounting of votes. The computerized vote-counting systems, Baker declared, are "precision machinery" that both count and recount votes more accurately than people do. Now, with Senator Kerry demanding recountability, an ominously intensifying partisan split has developed in Washington over whether to have a voter-verified paper trail and, when necessary, to conduct recounts with it.

Torment in Washington

Though no broad citizens' movement has formed against computerized vote-counting, a nationwide backlash against unverifiable paperless voting has. The paper ballots used in the op-scan and punch-card systems already provide a voter-verified paper audit trail (VVPAT). The principal proposed security safeguard for the DRE system was invented, but not patented, ten years ago by computer scientist Rebecca Mercuri, now a research fellow at Harvard. In her solution, after voters record their choices on the touch-screen, they confirm them on a paper ballot that appears under glass and then push a button to cast the vote, causing the machine to deposit the paper ballot in a box that will hold it for recounting if that is ordered. The printer for the paper ballots

Ronnie Dugger wrote the definitive warning essay about the dangers of computerized vote-counting in The New Yorker *of November 7, 1988. Research support was provided by The Nation Institute. Dugger wishes to acknowledge the special assistance of Frances Mendenhall, Pokey Anderson, Peter Neumann, Rebecca Mercuri, Roxanne Jekot and David Jefferson, and his debt to hundreds of other reporters whose work cannot be properly credited here.*

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for each voting machine should cost about $50; the total add-on could be $300–$600. Many jurisdictions also have the alternative of expanding or acquiring the relatively inexpensive optical-scan systems or other systems already in place that create paper trails.

In the US Senate seven Democrats and the one Independent are co-sponsoring a bill by Senators Bob Graham and Hillary Clinton to require paper trails on DREs by November, with a loophole for jurisdictions whose officials deem it to be technologically impossible. Clinton told the press that without a voter-verified paper trail GOP-leaning corporations might program voting machines to help Republicans steal elections [see sidebar, page 16]. In an interview in his hideaway office in the Capitol, Graham told me that he regards his and Clinton's bill as so obviously needed that it's "a no-brainer." The absence of a paper trail on the DREs could endanger "the legitimacy" of November's election, Graham said.

New Jersey Democrat Rush Holt introduced a House bill more than a year ago requiring a paper trail on DREs. It has 149 co-sponsors, including a few prominent Republicans. Holt says, "The verification has to be something that the voter herself or himself has to do"; without that, "we will never have a truly secure election." Holt's bill has opened up a partisan divide in the House. The chairman of the committee to which his bill is assigned, Ohio Republican Bob Ney, informed Holt that he is against the bill and would not allow a hearing on it. A few days later Graham and Holt wrote their fellow members of Congress that "without an independent, voter-verified paper trail, we will be able only to guess whether votes are accurately counted." Last month Ney relented and scheduled two hearings. Holt plans to offer his bill as an amendment to the Treasury appropriation after Congress returns from its August recess. Graham is still mulling his strategy.

The principal stated objection to a DRE paper trail comes from some spokespersons for the disabled, who characterize it as a step back from the touch-screen's improved accessibility and privacy. Many election officials, whose work paper ballots make both auditable and much more extensive, object variously that the attachment will add costs, that the printers might fail and that paper ballots can be stolen or counterfeited and sometimes produce somewhat different totals.

Leading citizen organizations have been split. Initially the League of Women Voters, concerned to minimize invalidly cast ballots, opposed the paper trail, but there was a revolt in the chapters and a petition for the paper trail was signed by 800 members. At the league's June convention, after a fight led by Barbara Simons, past president of the Association of Computer Machinery, the league switched sides, endorsing voting systems that are "recountable." Common Cause, placing the highest value on insuring that every vote is counted and can be recounted if necessary, has been among the leaders of the fight for the paper trail.

Around the States

Not surprisingly, the starkest resistance to the voter-verified paper trail comes from Florida, where more than half the citizens will have to vote on touch-screen systems in November. The President's brother, Governor Jeb Bush, and Jeb's Secretary of State, Glenda Hood, express unqualified confidence in the trustworthiness of the DRE systems and militantly oppose providing a paper-ballot trail for them. Hood has denied that the electronic voting machines can be tampered with in the software, saying: "The touch-screen machines are not computers. You'd have to go machine by machine, all over the state." A spokeswoman for her says flatly that "a manual recount is unnecessary."

This past spring a powerful state senator proposed to make it illegal to recount votes in the DRE systems, but she backed down when called on it by activists. Then Ed Kast, director of Hood's division of elections, who has since resigned, sought to achieve the same purpose by diktat, issuing a formal ruling that, despite the extant state law requiring recounts under certain circumstances, supervisors of elections do not need to recount DRE ballots. The ACLU and other groups have sued to invalidate that ruling; a spokesperson for the state Republican Party excoriates the suit as a left-wingers' "ploy to undermine voters' confidence."

Representative Robert Wexler, a Democrat from the southern tier of the three big counties on the Atlantic, which for election scandals is to Florida what Cook County is to Illinois, sued state and county election officials in state and federal court to require the VVPAT on DREs. He argues that allowing some voters to have manual recounts but not others violates the Supreme Court decision in *Bush v. Gore* compelling equal treatment of voters (although the majority specified it was only for that election). To date his suits, opposed at every step by the Bush Administration in Tallahassee, have gotten nowhere. If he loses, half the voters in Florida, those voting on DREs, will be denied the manual recounts that the other half can have.

The Bush forces in Florida geared up for another purge of released felons from the voter rolls. Ion Sancho, supervisor of elections for Leon County, admits with shame that the state's felon purge in 2000 resulted in more than 50,000 legal voters being disenfranchised. The state elections division identified 47,000 more suspected felons, a list disproportionately heavy with blacks, and asked that local election supervisors purge them. The Bush people refused to make the list public, but were ordered to do so by a judge. Only then was it discovered that the list excluded felons who are Hispanic. In Florida Hispanics tend to vote Republican. This dandy error was "absolutely unintentional," the Bush people said—while abandoning the then indefensible list. *Miami Herald* columnist Jim Defede wrote that Hood—an "amazing incompetent or the leader of a frightening conspiracy"—must resign.

"What are we going to do if there's a close race?" Wexler asked in the *Orlando Sentinel*. "The voting records of these machines will have disappeared in cyberspace." He told me angrily: "Apparently their motives are to suppress the vote in Florida in a number of different ways. They are refusing a paper trail on a computerized voting machine. They are again preparing on the felons—they've got a new and improved process. I don't trust 'em to do the right thing." This summer, Representative Alcee Hastings, whose district includes Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach, exclaimed, "Any way we cut it, these people are going to try to steal this election."

The Miami-Dade Reform Coalition asked Jeb Bush to audit the touch-screen machines this summer. Bush's spokesperson rebuffed that as "an accusation du jour." Undeterred, Democratic US Senator Bill Nelson of Florida demanded, "Why not do an audit when so much is at stake?... The national election for Presi-

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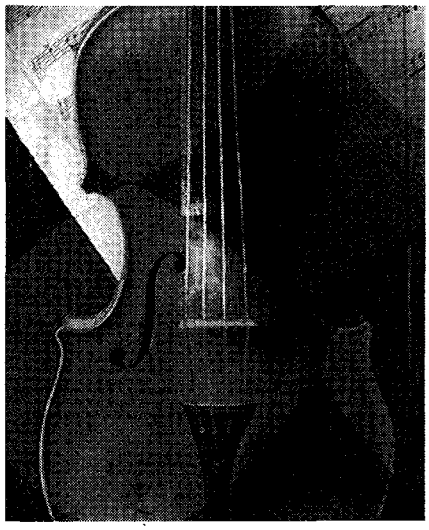

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Professor Greenberg holds degrees from Princeton University and the University of California at Berkeley, where he received a Ph.D. in music composition in 1984. He has composed more than 45 works and has lectured for many prestigious musical and arts organizations in the United States.

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dent could ride on the results coming out of Florida." Senator Nelson even sent a letter to Attorney General John Ashcroft asking that the federal government audit the machines.

This past spring in California, Diebold systems malfunctioned in two counties, disenfranchising thousands of voters. Secretary of State Kevin Shelley discovered that the voting systems in seventeen counties in the state had not been certified, as required by law. After two days of tumultuous hearings in Sacramento, during which high-level election officials called the company's behavior "despicable" and accused its officials of lying, Shelley prohibited the use of Diebold's systems in four counties, the first time this has happened in the United States. Shelley, who has said to the *Los Angeles Times* that he doesn't want to be "the Katherine Harris of the West Coast," also made the certification of voting systems in ten more counties dependent on their adoption of twenty-three security improvements that he specified. One of these requires those counties to let citizens vote on paper if they want to, but Shelley flinched at requiring a DRE paper trail this year. Four counties and advocates of the disabled sued Shelley to block his actions, but a federal judge ruled he had the authority and had used it reasonably.

Two secretaries of state, Republicans Dean Heller in Nevada and Matt Blunt in Missouri, have required that DREs in their states have a voter-verified paper ballot for the November election. Sequoia is producing the Mercuri VVPAT on demand for Nevada, and several small election companies, including Avante and AccuPoll, have built Mercuri attachments, won their certification and are ready to sell them to local jurisdictions now. Among the thirty-one other states with DRE voting systems in some of their jurisdictions, as of early summer legislatures in five had rejected requiring the paper trail, another nine were considering such a requirement and seventeen had no such proposal before them.

In swing-state Ohio, under procedures approved by Republican Secretary of State Kenneth Blackwell, thirty-one counties decided they would not use paperless DREs in November, and three said they would. Blackwell then ruled that because of unsolved security problems, none of them will. In Maryland, which imposed Diebold DREs statewide in 2002, the Board of Elections ruled that paper ballots cast in the March primary by citizens who did not want to vote on the DREs would not be counted. That's now in the courts. The Campaign for Verifiable Voting presented 13,000 signatures for a paper trail and called for the resignation of the state elections chief, Linda Lamone, who, sitting tight, said, "I think everything is going to be just fine." In Texas, Representative Ciro Rodriguez, chair of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, was renominated by 150 votes until 419 "found votes" made challenger Henry Cuellar the winner. Rodriguez is contesting the outcome, but since the voting in Bexar County (San Antonio) was conducted on DREs, the votes there can't be recounted. "There's no paper trail to verify what was put in," Cuellar said.

A Republican Count?

About half of the largest ballot-counting corporation, Election Systems & Software (ES&S), is owned by the Omaha World-Herald Company, which publishes the city's conservative daily newspaper, and about a fourth is owned by the McCarthy Group, an Omaha investment fund that is identified with Republican causes.

John Gottschalk, publisher of the *World-Herald*, recruited Chuck Hagel into American Information Systems (AIS), an Omaha-based vote-counting company. Hagel worked there five years, eventually becoming CEO and part owner. In 1995 Hagel resigned to run for the Senate from Nebraska, where AIS would be counting the votes in his election contest. A Gallup/*World-Herald* poll the Sunday before the voting showed Hagel and his Democratic opponent in a 47–47 dead heat. Hagel won two days later by a fourteen-point spread. Easily re-elected in 2002, Hagel is a likely GOP candidate for President in 2008.

Hagel's investment in the McCarthy Group is valued in his reports to the Senate at between $1 million and $5 million. I asked him if a US senator should be an investor in, as well as close friends and allies with, the leading owners of the largest vote-counting company in the country, which counts his own contested elections and expects to count about 61 million votes in November. Hagel replied: "I have no direct investment in ES&S. I have no discretion over McCarthy Group investments. But more importantly, disclosure is the answer [to] these dilemmas and questions. The people of America can determine if members have serious conflicts of interest."

According to the Center for Responsive Politics, Michael McCarthy, the CEO of the McCarthy Group, and his wife gave $28,750 to Republicans, nothing to Democrats, in the past three election cycles. Executives and employees of the firm have contributed almost six times as much to the GOP as to the Democrats ($74,245 to $13,300) in the past five and a half years.

Diebold CEO Walden O'Dell has bundled $100,000 or more in contributions for George W. Bush. O'Dell and his wife have given $19,965 to GOP candidates and campaign entities, nothing to Democrats. Since a letter was revealed in which he said he was "committed to helping Ohio deliver its electoral votes to the President" in November, O'Dell has withdrawn from politics and prohibited all Diebold executives and employees from making political contributions. Since 1991 Diebold had given the Republicans $343,366 and the Democrats $2,700, a ratio of 127–1.

David Hart, chairman of Hart InterCivic, said that because of the business he's in he doesn't contribute. A major investor in Hart InterCivic is Tom Hicks's investment firm, Stratford Capital Partners. Hicks was in the group of investors who bought the Texas Rangers from Bush and others for nearly three times their investment in it. Hicks has also been a lavish donor to Bush campaigns.

Executives and employees of one of the independent testing authorities (ITA), Ciber, Inc., favored the Republicans 57–1 over the past three election cycles, $101,900 to $1,800. The executives and principal owners of SysTest Labs, another ITA, appear to shun political giving. In the past three cycles employees at Wyle Laboratories, the third ITA, made a total of five contributions to five Republican recipients. R.D.

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A paper trail will not assure that elections won't be stolen in the DREs. "The only thing the VVPAT will do is give us the ability to prove that it happened," says Roxanne Jekot of Cumming, Georgia, a self-taught computer specialist who has become one of the most effective activists against paperless computerized voting. "There is nothing to deter that single outsourced information-technology worker [from manipulating the machine]. Nobody can prove that he did it."

Many states require recounts if an outcome in a computer-counted race is within a margin of less than 1 percent or a half or quarter percent, but that invites crooked programmers, if any such be at work, to jimmy their rigged outcomes to fall outside the recount-triggering spreads.

Furthermore, a paper trail isn't an audit unless the ballots are recounted. Even before the advent of touch-screen systems, obtaining actual recounts of elections was becoming more difficult. Election officials, election companies and state laws have often combined to block recounts or discourage narrowly losing candidates from getting them. Incredibly, in 2002 the legislature in Nebraska, the home state of Election Systems & Software, outlawed recounts of the paper ballots in the ES&S optical-scan computerized ballot-counting systems that tally 85 percent or so of the votes in that state. Colorado requires that for elections conducted on DRE machines, recounts must be conducted on the very same machines.

In Alabama two years ago, during a controversy over an election for governor conducted mostly on op-scan machines, Attorney General Bill Pryor, backing up the sheriff in one questioned county, ruled officially that under state law anyone recounting the ballots would be subject to arrest. This year President Bush, circumventing Senate hearings, elevated Pryor to the Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals in a recess appointment.

Identity Politics

While controversy rages across the country over whether computerized voting machines may result in lost or manipulated votes, there is another change in the election system this year that could lead to lost voting rights: Some people who show up at the polls will now have to show identification in order to cast a ballot. The federal Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) requires first-time voters in a "jurisdiction" who register by mail and who do not include verification with their registration form to present identification. The identification can be a photo ID, utility bill, bank statement or government document that shows the name and address of the voter. Despite the apparent limited reach of the new requirement, there is already evidence that it could lead to disenfranchisement of minority voters in particular.

Officials in South Dakota are investigating complaints from voters—primarily from counties in which Indian reservations are located—that they were not allowed to vote in the June primary when they could not produce photo identification, as is required for all voters under a recently passed South Dakota law. Although poll workers were also required by law to offer such voters affidavit ballots, they did not do so and simply turned them away.

Similar complaints came out of the Ohio primary in March. The Cleveland *Plain Dealer* reported that the voter-empowerment coordinator for the NAACP received at least fifty phone calls from black voters who were required to present identification in Cuyahoga County—a suspiciously high number considering that, according to the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections, a total of only 185 voters in the whole jurisdiction were required under HAVA to present identification. A leader of the Greater Cleveland Voter Registration Coalition also received such calls from black voters.

In Mississippi, a state with a long history of creating hurdles for minority voters, a bitterly partisan dispute over enacting a voter ID requirement for all voters—not just the narrow group identified in HAVA—rekindled conflicts from the not-so-distant past about racial discrimination at the polls. Most white legislators argued that this is a sensible anti-fraud measure. But African-American legislators reminded their colleagues of the barriers minority voters have had to overcome throughout American history, especially in the South, such as poll taxes and literacy tests. The voter identification requirement, they said, represents a new obstacle that is likely to fall disproportionately on minority voters. Mississippi blacks remember that as recently as 1993, the governor wanted to require people registering under the new motor-voter law—intended to make registration easier for minorities—to show identification.

There are many ways an ID requirement can be used to disqualify people from voting. For example, poll workers might—purposely or inadvertently—fail to give voters the complete list of alternative nonphoto IDs HAVA allows the voter to present. Also, any person who cannot present acceptable identification is supposed to be offered an affidavit or provisional ballot. But that may not happen—as in the South Dakota case—or even if it does, depending on state law and whether the voter voted in the right precinct, that ballot might not be counted. In addition, other voters might not have the kind of identification required by the law. For example, it is not unusual for only one spouse to be listed on household bills or for low-income people, senior citizens, people with disabilities and students not to have driver's licenses, bank accounts or paychecks. States can spell out in their implementation rules the many types of documents that can be construed to meet this requirement. In California, the secretary of state has said this includes such items as a student ID card, public housing ID card, drug prescription or tax return. But other states may interpret the types of acceptable identification more narrowly, and some voters could simply find themselves disenfranchised.

Finally, there has long been concern among civil rights advocates that election officials and poll workers might selectively enforce the HAVA identification provision—say by only asking minority voters to produce documentation. The nation is—justifiably—focused on the problems of the machines voters will be using this fall. In the meantime, however, let's not forget about the problems that may prevent voters from entering the booth in the first place.

TOVA ANDREA WANG

Tova Andrea Wang is Senior Program Officer and Democracy Fellow at The Century Foundation.

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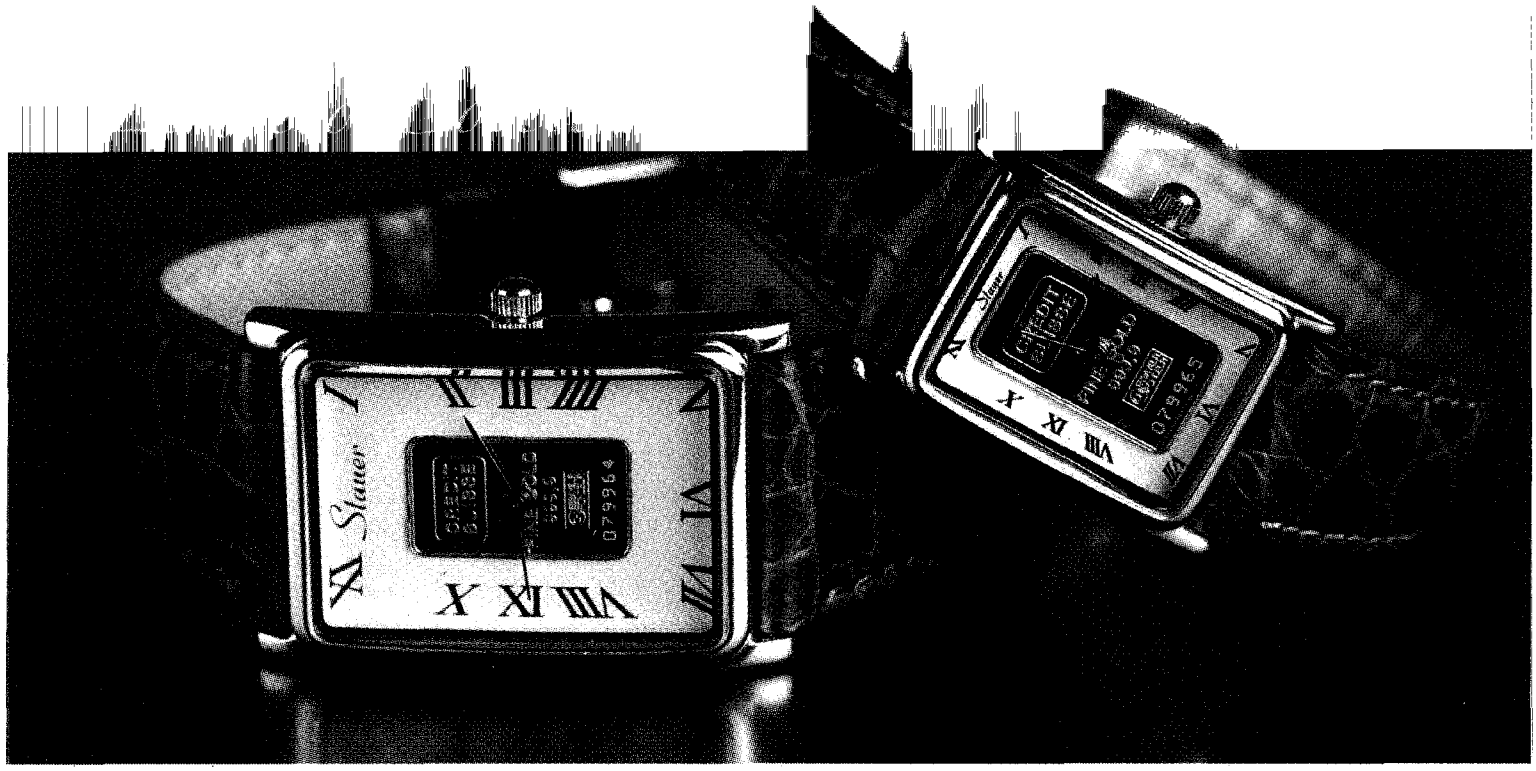

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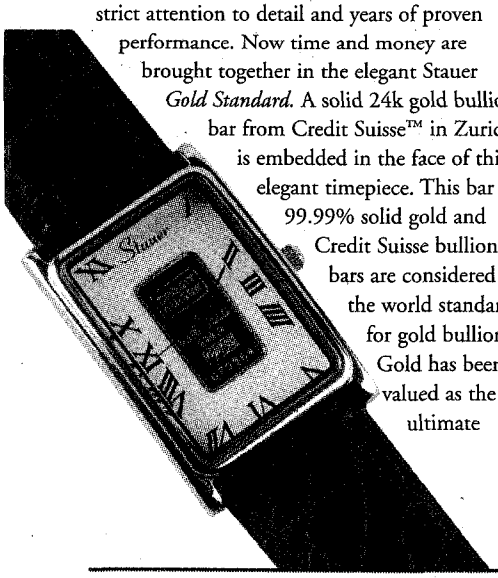

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'It's Really a Matter of Trust'

Confident, friendly, but officious, Jesse Durazo, the registrar of voters of Santa Clara County in the heart of the Silicon Valley, is typical of hundreds of local election officials who berate "the academics." This past spring, despite dire warnings from Professors Neumann of SRI and Dill of Stanford, Durazo led his county into buying 5,500 of the Sequoia AVC Edge DREs at $3,000 each ($20 million, figuring in everything). The anteroom of his county election headquarters is festooned with cheery signs such as one saying VOTING JUST GOT EASIER. He is delighted that DREs will facilitate voting by those who speak a foreign language (including Spanish, Vietnamese and Chinese).

Durazo said that the AVC had first been approved by the federal government (which is not correct) and then certified by the California secretary of state. He said that providing a voter-verified ballot would open the way to "unlimited error," while computer error, in contrast, can be "quantified." As for Trojan horses smuggling in corrupt instructions, he said in a confident tone, "I don't have those fears." Stealing votes in the computers is next to impossible, he insisted, because local ballots are set up at the last minute, there are a large number of races and ballot initiatives in any one election, and the order of the candidates' positions on the ballots is rotated in different precincts.

The three sets of all the votes, kept in the computer, provide the recount, he said. Are those not just copies of each other, automatically made? Durazo exclaimed in high dudgeon: "It's a redundant perfection!... It starts with the premise that the information in the system is correct."

Alfred Gonzales, Durazo's Filipino outreach specialist for voters who speak Tagalog, demonstrated the AVC, a sign on the top of which said TRY IT OUT TODAY. NO MORE PUNCHCARDS! I voted on it and asked Gonzales how I knew for sure that my vote would be counted. "Because it will be registered in the machine, saved in the hard drive, and put on a cartridge," he said. "At the end of the day it will be in the printout of the total." How did he know the machine would do that? "Because it has been federally certified!" he said. "There is fool-proof security." Well, one more thing, I asked. There's no ballot—what if you need a recount? "It's really a matter of trusting the machine," Gonzales said. Patting the AVC gently, he intoned with pride, "It's really a matter of trust."

"These companies are basically saying 'trust us,'" Rebecca Mercuri told the *New York Times*. "Why should anybody trust them? That's not the way democracy is supposed to work." Douglas Kellner, a leader on the New York City Board of Elections, exclaimed at a meeting of computer specialists in Berkeley this past spring, "I think the word 'trust' ought to be banned from election administration!" Dr. Avi Rubin, computer science professor and technical director of the Information Security Institute at Johns Hopkins University, recently testified before the federal Election Assistance Commission, "The vendors, and many election officials, such as those in Maryland and Georgia, continue to insist that the machines are perfectly secure. I cannot fathom the basis for their claims. I do not know of a single computer security expert who would testify that these machines are secure."

Mercuri wrote in her dissertation on vote-counting in 2001 that "security flaws (such as Trojan horse attacks)...are possible in all of the computer-based voting systems" and that providing thorough examinations of source code and other circuits for DREs that vary from municipality to municipality "is a Herculean task—one that is likely not to be affordable, even if it were accomplishable."

Not all the scientists agree. Michael Shamos of Carnegie-Mellon, who once warned that computerized vote-counting is highly vulnerable to fraud, now takes the position that "the issue is not whether voting systems are absolutely secure, but whether they present barriers sufficiently formidable to give us confidence in the integrity of our elections."

Voting Machines Stolen in Georgia

In 2000 five out of six Georgians cast a paper ballot that could be recounted on ES&S systems. In January 2001, in a speech to the Democratic-controlled legislature, Georgia Secretary of State Cathy Cox, a Democrat who is expected to run for governor in 2006, declared that considering all the recent problems down in Florida, Georgia should adopt one "uniform electronic voting system by November 2004." Upon Cox's fervent recommendation of the just-born Diebold Election Systems, in May 2002 Georgia agreed to pay Diebold $54 million for 19,000 DRE voting systems. The counties and cities of Georgia had chosen their own voting machines for the last time, and, less obviously, Georgians had lost their ability to recount their votes in contested elections.

At once Diebold set to manufacturing 282 of its AccuVote TS voting systems a day. Some of the earliest ones arriving in Georgia, sent out for use in the training of election workers, were left in a hotel conference room overnight, stolen and never recovered. Late that June the secret vote-counting codes inside nine to fourteen more of the Diebold machines were stolen. Diebold made an uncounted number of apparently illegal changes in the election-conducting code between June and November. The memory cards on which the votes on each of the computers were recorded on election day all over Georgia had no encryption. According to Rob Behler, who served as Diebold's production deployment manager in Georgia during the first half of that summer, those cards could be used to change the results manually, precinct by precinct.

Incumbent US Senator Max Cleland and incumbent Governor Roy Barnes, both Democrats, were odds-on favorites to win re-election. A week before the voting an *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* poll showed Cleland ahead by five points, 49–44, but on election day he lost to his Republican opponent, Saxby Chambliss, by seven points, 53–46, a twelve-point swing. The loss of Governor Barnes to Sonny Perdue was even more remarkable: a one-week switch of fourteen percentage points. These were suspicious anomalies, and subsequently in a Peach State Poll one in eight Georgia voters were "not very confident" or "not at all confident" that the DREs had produced accurate results; another 32 percent were only "somewhat confident."

In his front parlor at home in Georgia, Rob Behler told me that just before or just as he took over the Atlanta warehouse for Diebold, some of the voting machines had been sent out to "do demos," and in one southern county "somebody broke in and stole...[nine or] fourteen of the machines and, I think, one of the servers." He says the vote-counting programs in the stolen computers could have been completely reconstructed by reverse engineering and employed to jimmy the election.

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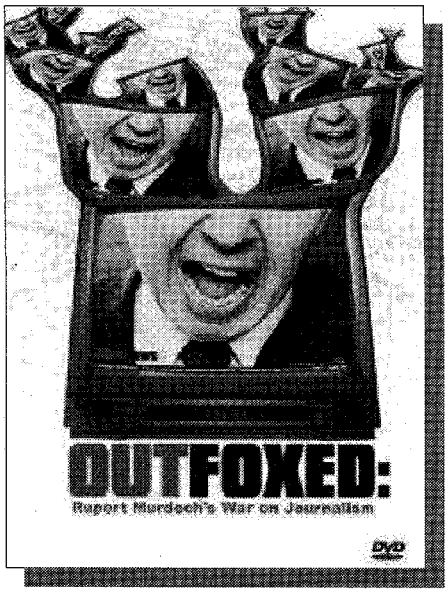

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"Quality-checking" the AccuVote machines as they arrived from Diebold at a warehouse in Atlanta, Behler and his crew found problems, he says, with "every single one" of them and about a fifth of them were shoved aside as unusable. When Diebold's programmers wanted "patches," that is, changes, inserted into the voting-system software, Behler says, they sent them to him via the company's open, insecure File Transfer Protocol (FTP) site in cyberspace. On his own unsecured laptop (resting on his desk as he spoke), Behler made twenty-two or twenty-three of the cards that were used to change the programs in the machines.

The night of the November 2002 election, sixty-seven of the memory cards used in Fulton County (Atlanta) disappeared. Running his laptop with a dual battery, Behler says, in six or seven hours he could have changed the totals on those sixty-seven cards. "There's no technical problem. There was absolutely zero protection on the card itself. You throw the card in, you just drill down into its files."

Brit Williams, a computer consultant at Kennesaw State University who runs Georgia's testing of voting systems, confirmed to me that the memory cards were not encrypted and all had the same password (1111), but each one, he contended, was "unique to its machine." He snapped, "We had 22,000 voting stations. How would you like to be in charge of 22,000 passwords?" Williams said the sixty-seven missing memory cards in Atlanta had been left in the machines by forgetful workers and were recovered.

The Georgia election of 2002 illustrates how serious risks of technical malfunctions and malicious tampering can occur without anyone outside the voting business finding out about them. No doubt in part because of the hasty start-up, Diebold's "security," though approved by the independent testing authorities and the state, was in fact farcical. Both of the losing Democrats had backed installation of the DRE systems statewide, so they could hardly call for recounts that their own state party had made literally impossible.

The Kids Prick Open a Scandal

Some kids who are "really interested in computers" were playing around last year, spidering through the links on various websites, when they discovered that Diebold had an unsecured FTP site (the same one Behler had used). One of the boys noted the fact on his website. Some other material on that site—not the stuff about Diebold—attracted a lot of hits, and that automatically led Google, the cyberspace search engine, to position it among the early-listed sites for many searches. One day Bev Harris, a literary publicist in Washington who was doing research for a book on vote-counting in computers, fed Google the right search words and the FTP site itself popped up. Knowing little about computers, she turned to David Allen, who was publishing her book, and he recognized the openly posted source codes and much other data concerning Diebold voting machines.

A small group of activists in Georgia worked with Harris. One of them, Roxanne Jekot, who runs a software consulting firm, analyzed "almost every line" of the Diebold source code and found many ways to change vote totals there and also in the Microsoft operating code. "The software is totally junk," she says. "They sold vaporware." Determined to get peer review of what she was finding, Jekot approached David Dill, the Stanford computer science professor.

"Both Roxanne and Bev were very courageous and determined to lift the veil of secrecy on the code," Dill says. "I think most academics would be much more cautious, especially about publishing the fact that they looked at the code. I certainly was, and I wasn't about to get other people in trouble by asking them to help me. A number of us would be inclined to talk to lawyers before doing anything too bold. So it made a huge difference that Bev posted the code in New Zealand for everyone to download. That reduced but didn't eliminate the legal risks of the Johns Hopkins/Rice University people looking at the code. If Bev and whoever else was involved in releasing this code had not been so brave, people [with strong professional reputations] might not have been able to speak out so freely."

After some agreements on a division of roles, Avi Rubin of Johns Hopkins and three other scientists produced a devastating twenty-three-page exposure of the Diebold software. That was followed by two more damaging technical studies in Ohio. Then a "Red Team" exercise to break the Diebold code was staged at RABA Technologies' headquarters in Maryland. Four of the eight computer scientists on the team had worked at the National Security Agency, and the team director had been the senior technical director for the NSA. The team concluded, "A voter can be deceived into thinking he is voting for one candidate when, in fact, the software is recording the vote for another candidate." A security vulnerability "allows a remote attacker to get complete control of the machine." And one can "automatically upload malicious software" that will "modify or delete elections." Some kids sniffing around in cyberspace had led, step by step, to the dawning national realization that computerized vote-counting puts democracy in grave danger.

What You Can Do

Public interest groups are mobilizing to head off another Florida. Petitions calling for a paper trail for DREs have attracted something approaching half a million signatures. Lou Dobbs's quick poll on CNN on "paper receipts of electronic votes" was running 5,735 to 85 for them on July 20. Greg Palast and Martin Luther King III have more than 80,000 signatures on their petition against paperless touch-screens and the purging of voter rolls. Global Exchange, the San Francisco–based organization, is inviting twenty-eight nonpartisan foreign observers to monitor the US election. Eleven members of Congress asked Kofi Annan to send UN monitors. Cindy Cohn of the Electronic Frontier Foundation is organizing attorneys for litigation against paperless electronic voting.

In mid-June the California secretary of state approved the nation's first set of standards for a verified paper trail for touch-screen machines. A recent "Voting, Vote Capture and Vote Counting" symposium at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government has produced an "Annotated Best Practices," available at www.ljean.com/files/ABPractices.pdf. On June 29 the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights and the Brennan Center for Justice, with the endorsement of Common Cause, the NAACP, People for the American Way and most of the leading scientific critics of paperless touch-screen voting, sent the nation's local election officials a "call for new security measures for electronic voting

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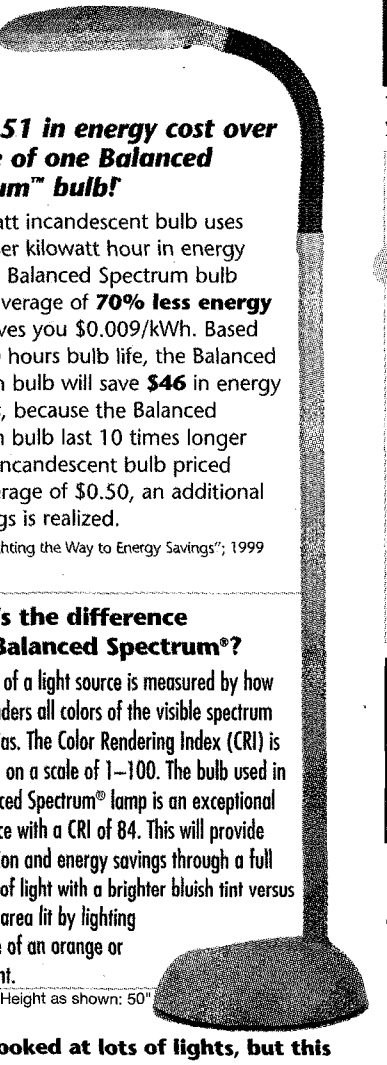

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machines," including local retention of independent security experts; the full report is available at www.civilrights.org/issues/voting/lccr_brennan_report.pdf.

Douglas Kellner, the New York City election expert, believes the best practical remedy for the dangers of computerized vote-counting is voting on optical-scan systems, posting the election results in the precincts and keeping the ballots with the machines in which they were counted. In all computerized vote-counting situations the precinct results should be publicly distributed and posted in the precincts before they are transmitted to the center for final counting, Kellner says. Once they are sent from the precinct the audit trail is lost.

Citizens can stay current on election developments via several websites: electionline.org, a reliable and up-to-date source; VerifiedVoting.org, Dill's group; notablesoftware.com, Mercuri's site; blackboxvoting.org, Bev Harris's site; countthevote.org, the site of the Georgia group led by Jekot; and these will key into many others. For a steady flow of news stories on this subject (and a few others) from around the country, get on the e-mail list of resist@best.com. Official information concerning each state is available online at each state's website for its secretary of state.

People should go down to their local election departments and ask their supervisor of elections how they are going to know that their votes are counted—and refuse to take "Trust us," or "Trust the machines," for an answer. They can be poll watchers. Many organizations are fostering poll watching, including People for the American Way's Election Protection 2004 project. Common Cause "has made election monitoring a major project," a spokesperson says. VerifiedVoting.org is concentrating on having people watch election technology, including pre-election testing as well as the procedures on election day. Bev Harris is organizing people to do such work (see her website).

Rebecca Mercuri says that if you believe an election has been corrupted through voting equipment, you should collect affidavits from voters; get the results from every voting machine for all precincts; get the names and titles of everyone involved; inventory the equipment, including the software, and try to have it impounded; demand a recount; and go to the press. Noting that all counties that have rushed to purchase DRE voting systems also have paper-ballot systems in place to handle absentee voters, motor-voters and emergency ballots for when the system breaks down, she suggests mothballing the DREs and using paper ballots. "Counties are saying there's nothing they can do but use the DREs in November, and that is simply untrue," Mercuri declares.

Much of this would be unnecessary if Congress enacted either the Graham-Clinton or the Holt bill, which would empower voters to verify their own votes and create a paper trail.

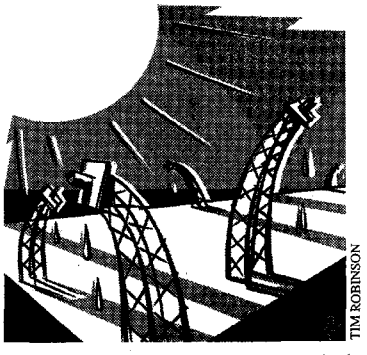
The computerized voting companies have precipitated a crisis for the integrity of democracy. Three months to go. ■

NATURE DOESN'T COMPROMISE ON GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE; ACTIVISTS MUST NOT EITHER.

Boiling Point

ROSS GELBSPAN

Climate change is not just another issue. It is the overriding threat facing human civilization in the twenty-first century, and so far our institutions are doing dangerously little to address it. Americans in particular are still in denial, thanks largely to the efforts of the fossil-fuel industry and its allies in the Bush Administration. But the nation's biggest environmental organizations and opposition politicians have also displayed a disturbing lack of leadership on this crucial challenge.



TIM ROBINSON

They are by no means the only roadblocks to meaningful action on climate change. In addition to the Bush Administration and the fossil-fuel lobby, the failure of the press to cover the climate crisis has left the United States ten years behind the rest of the world in addressing this issue. Given this background, the failure of environmentalists to fill the informational and political vacuum is especially distressing.

Over the past decade, the arguments against the reality of climate change by the carbon lobby have been as inconsistent as the weather itself. During the early years of the 1990s, the fossil-fuel lobby insisted that global warming was not happening. In the face of incontrovertible findings by the scientific community, the industry then conceded that climate change is happening but is so inconsequential as to be negligible. When new findings indicated that the warming is indeed significant, the spokesmen for the coal and oil industries then put forth the argument that global warming is good for us.

But the central argument that big coal and big oil have spent millions of dollars to amplify over the past decade is that the warming is a natural phenomenon on which human beings have little or no impact. That argument has been repeatedly discredited by the world's leading climate scientists. Under the auspices of the United Nations, more than 2,000 scientists from 100 countries have participated over the past fifteen years in what is most

Veteran journalist Ross Gelbspan is the author of The Heat Is On *and the just-published* Boiling Point, *which criticizes not just the environmental movement but also the media; examines the corruption of US policies; and offers global strategies to combat climate change. This excerpt was adapted by Mark Hertsgaard,* The Nation*'s environment correspondent, and is reprinted by arrangement with Basic Books, a member of the Perseus Books Group.* *Copyright © 2004 by Ross Gelbspan.*

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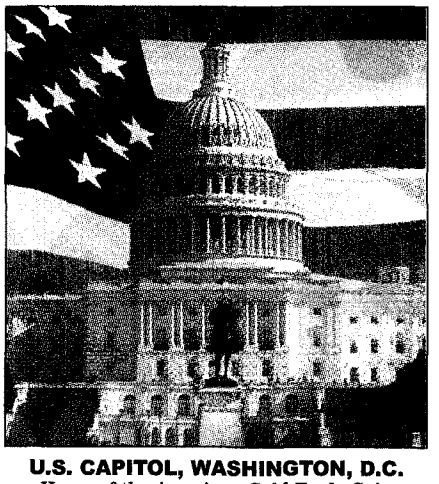

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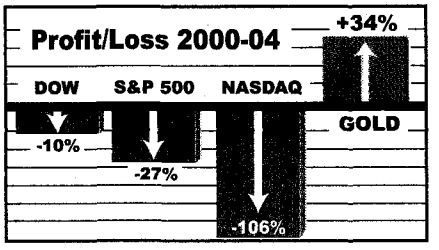

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likely the largest, most rigorously peer-reviewed scientific collaboration in history. In 1995 the UN-sponsored panel found a "discernible human influence" on the planet's warming climate. The scientists subsequently concluded that to stabilize our climate requires humanity to cut its use of coal and oil by 70 percent in a very short time.

The Kyoto Protocol, by contrast, calls for industrial countries to cut aggregate emissions by just 5.2 percent by 2012. That is a woefully inadequate response; as British Prime Minister Tony Blair admitted in 2002, "Even if we deliver on Kyoto, it will at best mean a reduction of one percent in global emissions.... In truth, Kyoto is not radical enough."

Nevertheless, the current low goals of the Protocol are championed by many Americans who should know better, including leading Democrats like John Kerry and virtually every national environmental organization. Confronted by the steel wall of resistance of the fossil-fuel lobby and their political allies, most climate activists and sympathetic politicians have retreated into approaches that are dismally inadequate to the magnitude of the challenge.

The major national environmental groups are trapped in a Beltway mentality that measures progress in small, incremental victories.

Around the country, advocates are working to get people to drive less, turn down their thermostats and reduce their energy use. Unfortunately, while many environmental problems are susceptible to lifestyle changes, climate change is not one of them.

Several of the country's leading national environmental groups are promoting limits for future atmospheric carbon levels that are the best they think they can negotiate. But while those limits may be politically realistic, they would likely be environmentally catastrophic. Most advocates, moreover, are relying on goals and mechanisms that were proposed about a decade ago, before the true urgency of the climate crisis became apparent. In 2000, researchers at the Hadley Center, Britain's main climate research institute, found that the climate will change 50 percent more quickly than was previously assumed. Their projections show that many of the world's forests will begin to turn from sinks (vegetation that absorbs carbon dioxide) to sources (which release it)—dying off and emitting carbon—by about 2050. In 1998 a team of researchers reported in the journal *Nature* that unless the world is getting half its energy from noncarbon sources by 2018, we will see an inevitable doubling—and possible tripling—of atmospheric carbon levels later in this century.

Virtually all the approaches by activists in the United States, moreover, are domestic in nature. They ignore both the world's developing countries and, equally important from the standpoint of national security, the oil-producing nations of the Middle East. Ultimately, even if the United States, Europe, Canada, Australia and Japan were to cut emissions dramatically, those cuts would be overwhelmed by the coming increase of carbon from India, China, Mexico, Nigeria and all the other developing countries struggling to stay ahead of poverty.

Many alternative approaches rely on market-based solutions because their proponents believe that, in an age of market fundamentalism, no other approach can gain political traction. Unfortunately, nature's laws are not about supply and demand; they are about limits, thresholds and surprises. The progress of the Dow does not seem to influence the increasing rate of melting of the Greenland ice sheet; the collapse of the ecosystems of the North Sea will not be arrested by an upswing in consumer confidence.

Many groups justify the minimalist goals of making people more energy efficient as the first phase in building a political base for more aggressive action. In the past, that pattern has been successful in developing various movements. In the case of climate change, however, nature's timetable is very different from that of political organizers. Unfortunately, the signals from the planet tell us we do not have the luxury of waiting another generation to allow for the orderly maturation of a movement.

Finally, the environmental establishment insists on casting the climate crisis as an environmental problem. But climate change is no longer the exclusive franchise of the environmental movement. Any successful movement must include horizontal alliances with groups involved in international relief and development, campaign finance reform, public health, corporate accountability, labor, human rights and environmental justice. The real dimensions of climate change directly affect the agendas of a wide spectrum of activist organizations.

The environmental movement has proved it cannot accomplish large-scale change by itself. Despite occasional spasms of cooperation, the major environmental groups have been unwilling to join together around a unified climate agenda, pool resources and mobilize a united campaign on the climate. Even as the major funders of climate and energy-oriented groups hold summit meetings in search of a common vision, they shy away from the most obvious of imperatives: using their combined influence and outreach to focus attention—and demand action—on the climate crisis. As the major national groups insist on promoting exclusive agendas and protecting carefully defined turfs (in the process, squandering both talent and donor dollars on internecine fighting), the climate movement is spinning its wheels.

Take the critical issue of climate stabilization—the level at which the world agrees to cap the buildup of carbon concentrations in the atmosphere. The major national environmental groups focusing on climate—groups like the Natural Resources Defense Council, the Union of Concerned Scientists and the WWF (World Wildlife Fund)—have agreed to accept what they see as a politically feasible target of 450 parts per million of carbon dioxide. While the 450 goal may be politically realistic, it would likely be environmentally catastrophic. With carbon levels having risen by only 90 parts per million (from their pre-industrial level of 280 ppm to more than 370 ppm today), glaciers are now melting into puddles, sea levels are rising, violent weather is increasing and the timing of the seasons has changed—all from a 1-degree Fahrenheit rise in the past century. Carbon concentrations of 450 ppm will most likely result in a deeply fractured and chaotic world.

The major national environmental groups, moreover, are trapped in a Beltway mentality that measures progress in small, incremental victories. They are operating in a Washington environment that is at best indifferent and at worst actively antago-

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nistic. And too often these organizations are at the mercy of fickle funders whose agendas range from protecting wetlands to keeping disposable diapers out of landfills.

The fossil-fuel lobby has hijacked America's energy and climate policies. One appropriate response might involve environmental leaders' forging a coalition of corporate and financial institutions of equivalent force and influence to counteract the carbon industry's stranglehold on Congress and the White House.

The vast majority of climate groups shun confrontation and work instead to get people to reduce their personal energy footprints. That can certainly help spread awareness of the issue. But by persuading concerned citizens to cut back on their personal energy use, these groups are promoting the implicit message that climate change can be solved by individual resolve. It cannot. Moreover, this message blames the victim: People are made to feel guilty if they own a gas guzzler or live in a poorly insulated home. In fact, people should be outraged that the government does not require automakers to sell cars that run on clean fuels, that building codes do not reduce heating and cooling energy requirements by 70 percent and that government energy policies do not mandate decentralized, home-based or regional sources of clean electricity.

What many groups offer their followers instead is the consolation of a personal sense of righteousness that comes from living one's life a bit more frugally. That feeling of righteousness, coincidentally, is largely reserved for wealthier people who can afford to exercise some control over their housing and transportation expenditures. Many poorer people—who cannot afford to trade in their 1990 gas guzzlers for shiny new Toyota Priuses—are deprived of the chance to enjoy the same sense of righteousness, illusory though it may be.

Given the lock on Congress and the White House by the carbon lobby, there is no way the US government will pursue a rapid global energy transition without a massive uprising of popular will. Environmentalists should therefore be forging alliances with other activists who focus on international development, campaign finance reform, corporate accountability, public health, labor, environmental justice and human rights—not to mention with communities of faith—to mobilize a broad, inclusive constituency around the issue.

The tragedy underlying the failure of the environmental community lies in the fact that so many talented, dedicated and underpaid people are putting their lives on the line in ways that will make little difference to the climate crisis. They are outspoken in their despair about what is happening to the planet. They are candid about their acceptance of a self-defeating political realism that requires relentless accommodation. What is missing is an expression of the rage they all feel.

The United States did not withdraw from Vietnam because a few individuals moved to Canada or Sweden to avoid military service or because the leaders of the antiwar movement negotiated a reduction of the bombing runs over Vietnam. The United States left Vietnam because a sustained uprising of popular will forced one President of the United States to drop his plans for reelection and pressured his successor to scramble until he had achieved something he could call "peace with honor."

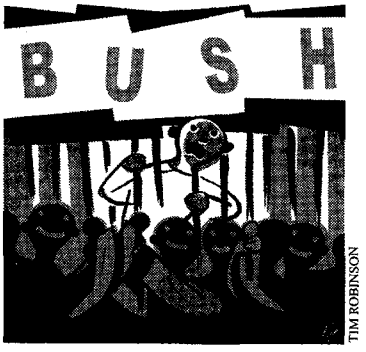
These comparisons to the climate movement may be seen as too harsh until one considers the most fundamental fact about the climate crisis: Activists compromise. Nature does not. ■

IN THE UNDECLARED WAR AGAINST DISSENT, DISAGREEMENT HAS BECOME A CRIME.

Bush Zones Go National

JIM HIGHTOWER

At the 2000 GOP nominating convention in Philadelphia, candidate Bush created a fenced-in, out-of-sight protest zone that could only hold barely 1,500 people at a time. So citizens who wished to give voice to their many grievances with the Powers That Be had to:



TIM ROBINSON

(1) Schedule their exercise of First Amendment rights with the decidedly unsympathetic authorities.

(2) Report like cattle to the protest pen at their designated time, and only in the numbers authorized.

(3) Then, under the recorded surveillance of the authorities, feel free to let loose with all the speech they could utter within their allotted minutes (although no one—not Bush, not convention delegates, not the preening members of Congress, not the limousine-gliding corporate sponsors and certainly not the mass media—would be anywhere nearby to hear a single word of what they had to say).

Imagine how proud the Founders would be of this interpretation of their revolutionary work. The Democrats, always willing to learn useful tricks from the opposition, created their own "free-speech zone" when they gathered in Los Angeles that year for their convention.

Once ensconced in the White House, the Bushites institutionalized the art of dissing dissent, routinely dispatching the Secret Service to order local police to set up FSZs to quarantine protesters wherever Bush goes. The embedded media trooping dutifully behind him almost never cover this fascinating and truly newsworthy phenomenon, instead focusing almost entirely on spoon-fed soundbites from the President's press office.

An independent libertarian writer, however, James Bovard,

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chronicled George's splendid isolation from citizen protest in last December's issue of *The American Conservative* (www.amconmag.com). He wrote about Bill Neel, a retired steelworker who dared to raise his humble head at a 2002 Labor Day picnic in Pittsburgh, where Bush had gone to be photographed with worker-type people. Bill definitely did not fit the message of the day, for this 65-year-old was sporting a sign that said: THE BUSH FAMILY MUST SURELY LOVE THE POOR, THEY MADE SO MANY OF US.

Ouch! Negative! Not acceptable! Must go!

Bill was standing in a crowd of pro-Bush people who were standing along the street where Bush's motorcade would pass. The Bush backers had all sorts of HOORAY GEORGE–type signs. Those were totally okey-dokey with the Secret Service, but Neel's...well, it simply had to be removed.

He was told by the Pittsburgh cops to depart to the designated FSZ, a ballpark encased in a chain-link fence a third of a mile from Bush's (and the media's) path. Bill, that rambunctious rebel, refused to budge. So they arrested him for disorderly conduct, dispatched him to the luxury of a Pittsburgh jail and confiscated his offending sign.

The Crawford, Texas, police chief was asked if wearing a 'Peace' button could be considered protesting without a permit. Answer: Yes.

At Bill's trial, a Pittsburgh detective testified that the Secret Service had instructed local police to confine "people that were making a statement pretty much against the President and his views." The district court judge not only tossed out the silly charges against Neel but scolded the prosecution: "I believe this is America. Whatever happened to 'I don't agree with you, but I'll defend to the death your right to say it'?"

This was no isolated incident. Bovard also takes us to St. Louis, where George appeared last year. About 150 sign-toting protesters were shunted off to a zone where they could not be seen from the street, and—get ready to spin in your grave, Jimmy Madison—the media were *not allowed* to talk to them, and protesters were *not allowed* out of the protest zone to talk to the media.

Now meet Brett Bursey. He committed the crime of holding up a NO WAR FOR OIL sign when sensitive George visited Columbia, South Carolina, last year. Standing amid a sea of pro-Bush signs in a public area, Bursey was commanded by local police to remove himself forthwith to the FSZ half a mile away from the action, even though he was already two football fields from where Bush was to speak. No, said Brett. So, naturally, they arrested him. Asked why, the officer said, "It's the content of your sign that's the problem."

Five months later, Brett's trespassing charge was tossed on the rather obvious grounds that—yoo-hoo!—there's no such thing as a member of the public trespassing on public property at a public event. But John Ashcroft is oblivious to the obvious, so the Justice Department of the United States of America (represented in this case by—can you stand it?—US Attorney Strom Thurmond Jr.) inserted itself into this local misdemeanor case, charging our man Brett with a *federal* violation of "entering a restricted area around the president." Great Goofy in the Sky—he was 200 yards away, surrounded by cheering Bushcalytes who were also in the "restricted area."

Ashcroft/Thurmond/Bush attempted to deny Bursey's lawyers access to Secret Service documents setting forth official policy on who gets stopped for criticizing the President, where, when and why. But Bursey finally obtained the documents and posted them on the South Carolina Progressive Network website, www.scpronet.com; they reveal that what the Secret Service did goes against official policy.

Then there's the "Crawford Contretemps." In May of 2003 a troupe of about 100 antiwar Texans were on their way by car to George W's Little Ponderosa, located about five miles outside the tiny town of Crawford. To get to Bush's place, one drives through the town—but the traveling protesters were greeted by a police blockade. They got out of their cars to find out what was up, only to be told by Police Chief Donnie Tidmore that they were violating a town ordinance requiring a permit to protest within the city limits.

But wait, they said, we're on our way to Bush's ranchette—we have no intention of protesting here. Logic was a stranger that day in Crawford, however, and Chief Tidmore warned them that they had three minutes to turn around and go back from whence they came, or else they'd be considered a demonstration, and, he reminded them, they had no permit for that. (Tidmore later said that he actually gave them seven minutes to depart, in order to be "as fair as possible.")

Five of the group tried to talk sense with Tidmore, but that was not possible. Their reward for even trying was to be arrested for refusing to disperse and given a night in the nearby McLennan County jail. The chief said he could've just given them a ticket, but he judged that arresting them was the only way to get them to move, claiming that they were causing a danger because of the traffic.

This February, the five were brought to trial in Crawford. Their lawyer asked Tidmore if someone who simply wore a political button reading "Peace" could be found in violation of Crawford's ordinance against protesting without a permit. Yes, said the chief. "It could be a sign of demonstration."

The five were convicted.

The Bushites are using federal, state and local police to conduct an undeclared war against dissent, literally incarcerating Americans who publicly express their disagreements with him and his policies. The ACLU and others have now sued Bush's Secret Service for its ongoing pattern of repressing legitimate, made-in-America protest, citing cases in Arizona, California, Virginia, Michigan, New Jersey, New Mexico, Texas—and coming soon to a theater near you!

If incarceration is not enough to deter dissenters, how about some old-fashioned goon-squad tactics like infiltration and intimidation of protesters? In May of 2002 Ashcroft issued a decree terminating a quarter-century-old policy that bans FBI agents from spying on Americans in their political meetings and churches.

Not only were federal agents "freed" by Bush and his attack dog Ashcroft to violate the freedoms (assembly, speech, privacy) of any and all citizens, but they were encouraged to do so. This unleashing of the FBI was done in the name of combating foreign terrorists. The Bushites loudly scoffed at complaints that

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agents would also be used to spy on American citizens for political purposes having nothing to do with terrorism. While officials scoffed publicly, however, an internal FBI newsletter quietly encouraged agents to increase surveillance of antiwar groups, saying that there were "plenty of reasons" for doing so, "chief of which it will enhance the paranoia endemic in such circles and will further service to get the point across that there is an FBI agent behind every mailbox."

Likewise, in May of last year, the Homeland Security Department waded butt-deep into the murky waters of political suppression, issuing a terrorist advisory to local law enforcement agencies. It urged all police officials to keep a hawk-eyed watch on any homelanders who [**Warning:** Do not read the rest of this sentence if it will shock you to learn that there are people like this in your country!] have "expressed dislike of attitudes and decisions of the US government."

MEMO TO TOM RIDGE, SECRETARY OF HSD: Sir, that's everyone. All 280 million of us, minus George Bush, you and the handful of others actually making the decisions. You've just branded every red-blooded American a terrorist. Maybe you should stick to playing with your color codes.

Last November, Ashcroft weighed back in with new federal guidelines allowing the FBI to make what amount to pre-emptive spying assaults on people. Much like the nifty Bush-Rumsfeld doctrine of attacking countries to pre-empt the possibility that maybe, someday, some way, those countries might pose a threat to the United States, the Bush-Ashcroft doctrine allows government gumshoes to spy on citizens and noncitizens alike without any indication that the spied-upon people are doing anything illegal. The executive directive gives the FBI authority to collect "information on individuals, groups, and organizations of possible investigative interest."

The language used by Ashcroft mouthpiece Mark Corallo to explain this directive is meant to be reassuring, but it is Orwell-level scary: What it means, says Corallo, is that agents "can do more research." "It emphasizes early intervention" and "allows them to be more proactive." Yeah, they get to do all that without opening a formal investigation (which sets limits on the snooping), much less bothering to get any court approval for their snooping. A proactive secret police is rarely a positive for people.

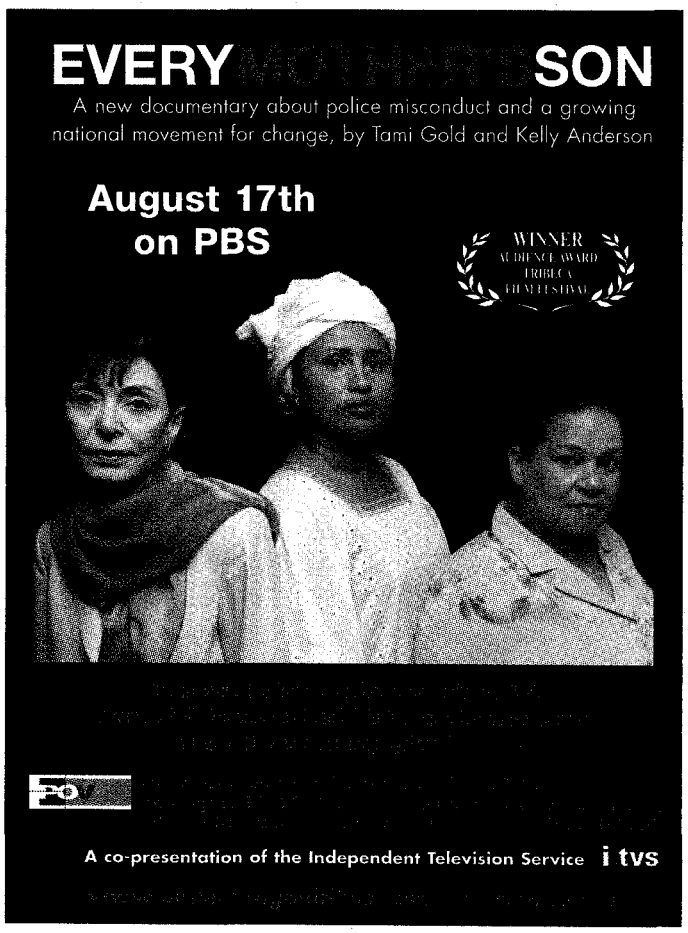
With the FBI on the loose, other police powers now feel free to join in the all-season sport of intimidating people. In Austin, even the Army was caught snooping on us. At a small University of Texas conference in February to discuss Islam in Muslim countries, two Army officers were discovered to be posing as participants. The next week two agents from the Army Intelligence and Security Command appeared on campus demanding a list of participants and trying to grill Sahar Aziz, the conference organizer. Alarmed by these intimidating tactics, Aziz got the help of a lawyer, and the local newspaper ran a story. The Army quickly went away—but a spokeswoman for the intelligence command refused even to confirm that the agents had been on campus, much less discuss why the US Army is involved in domestic surveillance and intimidation.

In California an antiwar group called Peace Fresno included in its ranks a nice young man named Aaron Stokes, who was always willing to be helpful. Unfortunately, Aaron died in a motorcycle wreck, and when his picture ran in the paper, Peace Fresno learned that he was really Aaron Kilner, a deputy with the sheriff's department. The sheriff said he could not discuss the specifics of Kilner's infiltration role, but that there was no formal investigation of Peace Fresno under way. He did insist, however, that there is potential for terrorism in Fresno County. "We believe that there is," the sheriff said ominously (and vaguely). "I'm not going to expand on it."

If the authorities think there is terrorist potential in Fresno (probably not real high on Osama's target list), then there is potential everywhere, and under the Bush regime, this is plenty enough reason for any and all police agencies to launch secret campaigns to infiltrate, investigate and intimidate any and all people and groups with politics that they find even mildly suspicious…or distasteful.

The attitude of police authorities was summed up by Mike van Winkle, a spokesperson for the California Anti-Terrorism Information Center (another spinoff of the Homeland Security Department—your tax dollars at work). After peaceful antiwar protesters in Oakland were gassed and shot by local police, van Winkle [**Note:** I do not make up these names] explained the prevailing thinking of America's new, vast network of antiterrorist forces:

> *You can make an easy kind of link that, if you have a protest group protesting a war where the cause that's being fought against is international terrorism, you might have terrorism at that protest. You can almost argue that a protest against that is a terrorist act. I've heard terrorism described as anything that is violent or has an economic impact. Terrorism isn't just bombs going off and killing people.* ■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COMMENT

(Continued From Page 6)

detailed refutation of a favorite allegation of Dick Cheney and the neocons: that the ringleader of the 9/11 hijackers met an Iraqi intelligence officer in Prague five months before 9/11.

No wonder Bush was not eager to see this commission established. Now he is rushing to implement some of its recommendations, but only because pressure has mounted. The question remains, Why didn't he give a damn for nearly three years? A leader worth re-electing would not have waited to ask questions, demand answers and take action. DAVID CORN

Time's Up

It's been four years since the International AIDS Conference was first held in the developing world, in Durban, South Africa, and activists' demand for universal treatment access was catapulted onto the world stage. Then, the idea of treating the millions of HIV-infected people worldwide was considered farfetched: US officials still insisted in 2001 that Africa's healthcare infrastructure was too primitive to support the prescription of HIV therapies and, more despicably, that Africans couldn't take these medicines successfully because they couldn't tell time. And the cost of these patented drugs was prohibitive—as high as $15,000 per year. The official policy of wealthy nations was to focus on prevention and leave the millions already infected to die.

But by the time some 19,000 AIDS researchers, government leaders, UN officials and AIDS advocates gathered in Bangkok this July, the winds had so shifted that the official conference theme was "Access for All." The question was no longer *whether* to treat but *how*. In the intervening years, studies in Uganda and South Africa proved that poor Africans with HIV are as consistent at popping pills as their middle-class counterparts in San Francisco. The World Bank, Kofi Annan and George W. Bush all launched AIDS initiatives emphasizing treatment. The 2001 Doha Declaration greenlighted the production of cheap lifesaving drugs, and since then the cost for generic combination pills has dropped to as little as $140 a year. And the World Health Organization set an ambitious "3x5" goal: to treat 3 million of those ill enough to require therapy—about half the global need—by the end of 2005.

In conference rooms and in the streets, the most pressing challenges came to the fore: stanching the devastating brain drain of doctors and nurses recruited for better-paying jobs in the North; rousing political leaders from their persistent denial (on depressing display when India's Sonia Gandhi insisted that her government—now treating fewer than 1,000 of its 5 million HIV-positive citizens—has the problem under control); bolstering healthcare infrastructure starved by IMF austerity programs; and, above all, ending the vagaries of donors, whose specially earmarked funds and idiosyncratic reporting requirements thwart efforts to scale up treatment. The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria, with its hands-off approach—it funds any nationally coordinated AIDS proposal that its technical experts review favorably—emerged as a model at Bangkok for how funds can dovetail with countries' national AIDS plans. Bush's emergency plan, on the other hand—with its morality-based restrictions on prevention, patent-bound rules on drug purchasing and preference for circumventing governments to fund handpicked NGOs—came in for ferocious criticism.

Epidemiologist Karen Stanecki noted that the accelerating epidemic in Asia is fueled largely by drug injection with dirty needles and by condomless commercial sex, yet the Bush plan won't fund needle exchanges or prevention efforts among sex workers. Joia Mukherjee, the medical director of a successful HIV-treatment program in Haiti, said she nearly rejected US dollars outright because they can be used only to buy brand-name drugs, which would quintuple her costs. Representatives of such "recipient" nations as Mozambique complained that Bush's restrictions undermined their national strategies or forced them to use scientifically unproven approaches. And everyone from a World Bank official to an Indian woman with HIV excoriated Bush's "ABC" policy, which emphasizes abstinence and faithfulness over condoms, as brutally irrelevant to the millions of faithful women infected by their husbands. The US Government Accountability Office released a report at Bangkok on Bush's initiative that closely echoed those concerns.

But the US delegation seemed to have wax in its ears. When activists held a march on opening day to put urgency into the "access for all" theme, the heads of UNAIDS and the Global Fund joined the protesters to accept their written demands. But US global AIDS head Randall Tobias refused to come out—and then canceled three scheduled appearances. Tobias finally agreed to speak only after securing an opportunity to appear solo, and then nearly fled the podium after being met by protesters. Afterward, he sniped at the Global Fund while claiming that Bush's $200 million suggested contribution for 2005 was sufficient. (The fund says it needs $1.2 billion from the United States next year.) Abner Mason, who sits on Bush's presidential AIDS council, captured the mood of the US squad: "Just once I would like to hear someone say thank you for what the President has done on AIDS," he said.

Zackie Achmat, an HIV-positive leader of the Treatment Action Campaign who risked jail to bring generics into South Africa in a challenge to his own government, provided an effective rejoinder. Asked on the conference's last day about the "America bashing" that had taken place, he replied, "America-bashing? It was not America-bashing but an understanding that the greatest threat to global public health is George W. Bush. Scaling up AIDS treatment is the biggest challenge the world has ever taken up. And it can't be done by a superpower imposing its will and its ideological agenda."

Nearly 38 million people worldwide now live with HIV, and more than 6 million of them, already symptomatic, can tell time quite well. If a donor as significant as the United States continues its refusal to fund generic drugs, 3x5 will fail, and their health will soon fail too. The American go-it-alone war on Iraq has cost at least 11,000 lives so far. But its go-it-alone strategy on AIDS could cost far more. Bush's plan must be gutted and rebuilt before more time is lost. ESTHER KAPLAN

Esther Kaplan is the author of With God on Their Side: How Christian Fundamentalists Trampled Science, Policy and Democracy in George W. Bush's White House, *to be published in October by New Press.*

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

Latin America's Longest War

PETER CANBY

In May, Jan Egeland, the United Nations Undersecretary for Humanitarian Affairs, called a news conference in New York to declare publicly what he had been warning people about for some time: that the nation of Colombia had become "by far the biggest humanitarian catastrophe of the Western Hemisphere."

Chronic and intractable warfare among paramilitaries, the army, cocaine traffickers and leftist guerrillas has so wreaked havoc on the countryside that, Egeland pointed out, 2 million of its 36 million inhabitants had become refugees. This made Colombia the country with the largest number of displaced people after only Congo and Sudan. Many of the displaced, he went on to say, had fled to shantytowns on the outskirts of Colombia's cities, thereby joining a larger Third World flight of the rural dispossessed into poverty and despair on the edges of cities. In Colombia, refugees have settled in shantytowns like one outside Cartagena, where, Egeland noted, 10,000 people are "floating in a sea of sewage and garbage." With few prospects for either jobs or education, the young and the unemployed in these slums had turned to crime or become easy recruits as gunmen for left-wing guerrillas and rightist paramilitaries.

Colombia's problems are of long standing and are deeply tied into the country's tortured and violent history. They do not appear to be amenable to quick fixes—especially military ones. Colombia is already awash in guns. More and bigger guns aren't likely to bring the country's warring parties any closer to a peace accord. But over the past few years, while the world's attention has been transfixed by events in Iraq, the United States has become deeply involved in a military buildup in Colombia and is rapidly becoming more so. At present, the United States has some 400 military personnel in Colombia as well as another 400 of the increasingly ubiquitous civilian contractors. And in March the Bush Administration announced its intention to request authority from Congress to double the number of military personnel to 800 and raise the number of civilian contractors to 600. This is part of the Administration's effort to renew, in 2006, "Plan Colombia," a program under which the United States has already spent some $3 billion (more than 75 percent of it on military aid). On the eve of the Iraq war, Colombia was the third-largest recipient of American aid after only Israel and Egypt.

The goal of Plan Colombia is to stem the nearly $40 billion-a-year flow of cocaine to the United States, 80 percent of which comes from Colombia. In the aftermath of 9/11, glib analogies were made in Washington between cocaine, terrorism and Osama bin Laden. Colin Powell declared Colombian insurgents "terrorists with a global reach" and said they posed a threat to US interests. What had been strictly an antidrug campaign was thus, by a deft use of the terrorism trump card, transformed into a counterinsurgency campaign. But nothing is easy about cocaine in Colombia, and eradicating—even slowing—cocaine growth there is a formidable task. Indeed, if cocaine remains pervasive in Colombia, it's arguably because of the failure of American drug policies elsewhere in Latin America. Until the early 1980s, coca growing was largely confined to the Andean countries of Peru and Bolivia, where it is indigenous (and where its leaves are chewed to ward off hunger and exhaustion). But US-led eradication efforts in those countries led to the spread of coca production in Colombia, where it fuels several insurgencies that have grown to the point where they now control large swaths of Colombian territory.

In her eloquent and insightful book, *More Terrible Than Death: Massacres, Drugs, and America's War in Colombia*, Robin Kirk, Human Rights Watch's former Colombia researcher, notes that in Colom-

Peter Canby is on the staff of The New Yorker. *He writes frequently on Latin America.*

BOOKS DISCUSSED IN THIS ESSAY

MORE TERRIBLE THAN DEATH: Massacres, Drugs, and America's War in Colombia.
By Robin Kirk.
PublicAffairs.
317 pp. Paper $16.95.

WALKING GHOSTS: Murder and Guerrilla Politics in Colombia.
By Steven Dudley.
Routledge.
252 pp. $27.50.

INSIDE COLOMBIA: Drugs, Democracy and War.
By Grace Livingstone.
Rutgers.
275 pp. $21.95.

LOYAL SOLDIERS IN THE COCAINE KINGDOM: Tales of Drugs, Mules, and Gunmen.
By Alfred Molano.
Columbia.
158 pp. $24.50.

LAW IN A LAWLESS LAND: Diary of a *Limpieza* in Colombia.
By Michael Taussig.
New Press.
208 pp. $24.95.

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bia, cocaine is a "marvelous, terrible thing. It defeats ideology, the United States, moral concerns, reason. It is a money-making whirlwind that simply anyone can ride." Certainly cocaine has been successfully ridden by FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia), a peasant-based and largely peasant-led Marxist insurgency that is the hemisphere's oldest and most powerful revolutionary group. FARC's strength derives not from trafficking cocaine (although there are reports that it traffics to a small degree) but by taking a 10 percent protection fee from peasant supporters who grow coca. This adds up to a not inconsiderable amount of money. No one really knows how much, but there are reports that it approaches $500 million a year. This has allowed FARC to field a well-armed military force of up to 20,000 that, by the 1990s, had grown strong enough to fight pitched battles against, and sometimes defeat, the Colombian Army.

Arrayed against FARC is a loose consortium of paramilitaries known as Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia, or AUC. The paramilitaries, sometimes referred to as the "armed wing of the middle class," initially arose in response to FARC's other major revenue stream—kidnapping. Before long, however, they developed close, unacknowledged ties to Colombia's military. Kirk quotes a Colombian officer who coyly likens the relationship between the army and the paramilitaries to that between a married man and his mistress: "One has one but doesn't bring her home to meet your family." But there is nothing lighthearted about the AUC, which during the 1990s waged a vicious war against real and imagined FARC sympathizers, often colluding with the army to cordon off towns and then committing gruesome, high-profile massacres of suspected FARC sympathizers using, in addition to the usual arms, chainsaws, axes and hammers. By most reports, the paramilitaries have become so involved in cocaine trafficking that they and the traffickers are essentially one and the same.

Plan Colombia was originally conceived in 1999 as a peace initiative on the part of then–Colombian president Andres Pastrana. In her concise, well-informed, and sharp-edged primer, *Inside Colombia: Drugs, Democracy and War*, Grace Livingstone describes how Pastrana's Plan Colombia was hijacked by the United States and transformed into the military program it has since become. This process was facilitated by the spectacular collapse of the Pastrana administration's larger peace initiative. As part of that plan, Pastrana granted FARC what was often referred to as a "Switzerland-sized" autonomous zone in the southern part of the country, a zone that had been largely controlled by the guerrillas anyway and soon came to be known as "Farclandia." The creation of Farclandia was supposed to impress the guerrillas with the seriousness of the government's desire for peace, but FARC somehow remained unimpressed, and the collapse of negotiations between FARC and Pastrana is usually attributed to uncooperative behavior on FARC's part. FARC representatives repeatedly failed to show up for negotiation sessions and, over the course of the peace process, killed the attorney general's wife (who also had a career as a popular folk singer), kidnapped a diplomat traveling in a UN vehicle and captured and executed the chair of the Colombian House of Representatives Peace Commission while he was on his way to negotiate with the guerrillas. FARC has a long history of political obstructionism, a tendency that may reflect what Alma Guillermoprieto described in the *New York Review of Books* as "the cocoon of isolation and paranoia that clandestinity generates."

Colombia's paramilitaries are deeply entrenched in the country's power structure, controlling nearly a third of the seats in Congress.

But FARC's seeming political ineptness can also be attributed to an understandable skepticism about the Colombian government's intentions. Colombia has a long history of duplicity and betrayal toward FARC, the most dramatic example of which is described by Steven Dudley in *Walking Ghosts: Murder and Guerrilla Politics in Colombia*. Dudley's book tells the sad chronicle of the Unión Patriótica during the late 1980s and early '90s. The UP was FARC's attempt at a legal political party. Despite its candidates' considerable appeal, the government was unable or unwilling to protect them, and paramilitary death squads ruthlessly picked them off—even assassinating the party's popular presidential candidate in broad daylight at the Bogotá airport. This series of assassinations not only crushed the UP as a party but, by eliminating FARC leaders who might have had the flexibility to negotiate with the government, strengthened the militaristic and even Stalinist tendencies in FARC.

Since the mid-1960s, FARC has been led by a tough, wily, countryman named Manuel Marulanda, known as "Tirofijo," or "Sureshot." Tirofijo has long survived by force of arms and does not appear to have been unduly troubled by the massacre of the UP's leadership. But Tirofijo is well into his 70s, and there are published reports that he is suffering from prostate cancer. Despite this, FARC's militaristic tendencies are likely to prevail for the foreseeable future. Tirofijo's heir apparent is Jorge Briceño Suarez, known affectionately as "Mono Jojoy," a rotund, fair-skinned man who is said to be a military genius with little or no interest in politics. According to Kirk, he once explained to a journalist that "I was nothing when I was a civilian. I was created by weapons."

Throughout Pastrana's term in office, the paramilitaries grew enormously. Under the leadership of Carlos Castaño, a charismatic psychopath who never finished high school, the paramilitaries wrested control of the cocaine trade from the cartels and, like FARC, seized control of large sections of the countryside, particularly in the north. The zone of undisputed government control was reduced, in many ways, to the area around Bogotá, and FARC correctly perceived that whatever peaceful intentions the government might profess, its ability to restrain the paramilitaries was another matter. Such was the dissipation of the government's power by the end of Pastrana's term, writes Kirk, that a joke circulated around Bogotá that Pastrana was the best president Colombia ever had because "he was given one country and made it into three!"

In many ways, the ascendancy of the paramilitaries reached its logical conclusion with the election for a four-year term, in May of 2002, of the current president, Álvaro Uribe. Uribe is from a prominent ranching family and had been governor of Antioquia, a state at the very nexus of Colombia's cocaine trade. He was the undeclared candidate of the paramilitaries. His father had been killed by FARC and FARC twice tried to assassinate him during his campaign. For his promise of a military solution to Colombia's problems, Uribe came to be known as "Colombia's Ariel Sharon." He has been unreservedly supportive of every aspect of Plan Colombia, from strengthening the country's military to—especially—reducing the growth of coca.

Coca reduction is close to the heart of Plan Colombia. The United States has been involved in heavy, Vietnam-like aerial spraying of Colombia's coca fields. Guarded by a small fleet of Black Hawk and Huey

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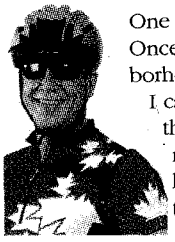

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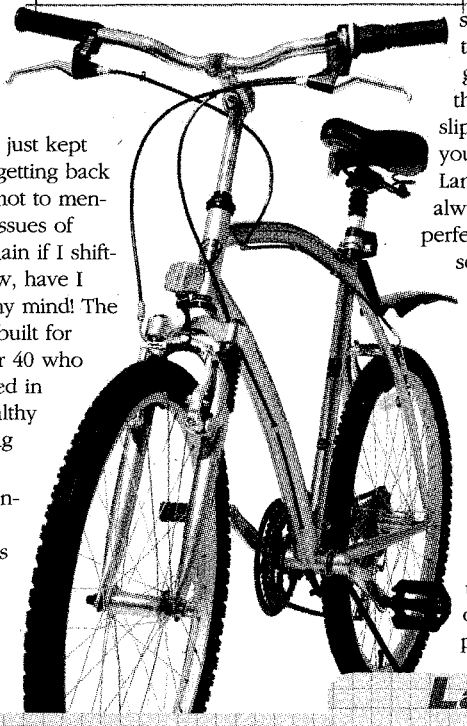

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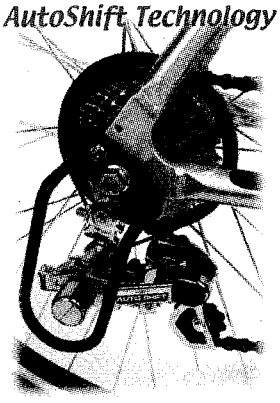

The LandRider is the only bicycle on the market that features the revolutionary AutoShift transmission. The Autoshift has 7 gears for flats and 7 gears for hills—which ensures that you are in the right gear no matter what terrain you're riding on!

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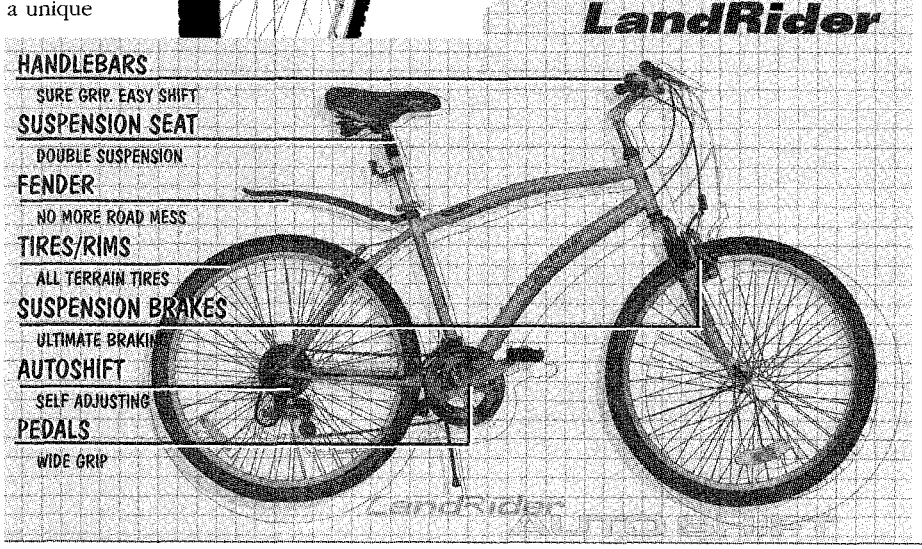

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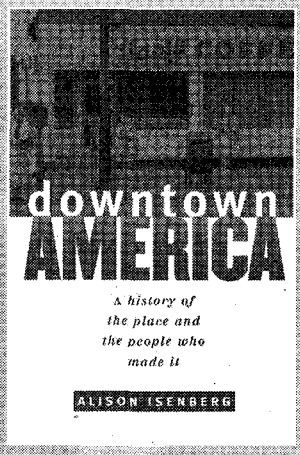

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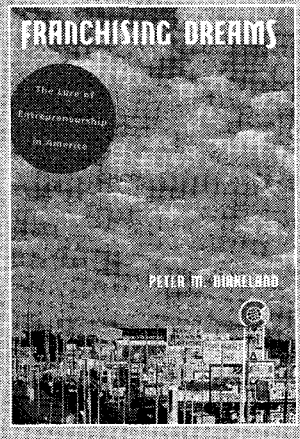

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helicopters, crop-dusting planes have sprayed hundreds of thousands of gallons of the herbicide Roundup Ultra (which has the EPA's highest toxicity rating), combined with a Colombian surfactant of unknown toxicity called Cosmoflux. The planes are piloted by independent contractors, eleven of whom have been killed and three of whom are being held captive by FARC. A few months ago, in connection with the campaign to renew Plan Colombia, the Bush Administration announced that in the year 2003 alone, spraying in Colombia had reduced the number of coca fields by 20 percent—this on top of a 14 percent reduction the previous year. Peasants in the spray zones have complained of respiratory problems, temporary blindness, the destruction of non-cocaine crops and the death of their farm animals, but no one seems much concerned. The spraying continues.

One of the reasons there has been so little outcry is that many of the fields being sprayed belong to Colombia's poorest peasantry and, not coincidentally, are effectively controlled by FARC. In the midst of the post-9/11 hysteria, the Bush Administration requested and received authorization from Congress to declare FARC a terrorist threat. It was thus able to extend the mandate of Plan Colombia to allow the United States to use its drug funds and helicopters in anti-FARC operations. Under Plan Colombia, moreover, the United States has set up an intensive intelligence-gathering operation on FARC and sought to both professionalize Colombia's army and get it out of the barracks, where it had traditionally spent most of its time. There's little question that FARC has taken a knock with all this. Some of its coca-growing territory has been wrested away by paramilitaries, and the paramilitaries have used some of this land to move in a significant way into growing coca. FARC's income base has clearly been affected. In January, moreover—with the help of American intelligence—its financial chief, a former banker from an aristocratic family named Ricardo Palmera, was captured in Ecuador, where he had gone to obtain medical treatment. There are reports that American intelligence has also succeeded in disrupting FARC's supply lines. Despite these setbacks, FARC is far from being defeated, and many people argue that, if anything, it has simply retreated into the rain forests to wait out the end of Uribe's term. The Colombian congress is currently considering a constitutional amendment that would allow a second Uribe term, but, barring this, the expectation is that his successor will follow the usual Colombian model and, as Robin Kirk puts it, "prove easier to intimidate."

Amid the same post-9/11 hysteria that allowed the Bush Administration to declare FARC a terrorist threat, however, human rights groups achieved a significant victory by having Colombia's paramilitaries similarly tagged. Since many of the paramilitary leaders are known cocaine traffickers—Castaño himself is under indictment and the United States is actively seeking his extradition—this was not a stretch legally. But what has been surprising is the degree to which Uribe has proven more complex than his pre-election characterization and has demonstrated a willingness to move against not just the guerrillas but also the paramilitaries. His approach to the paramilitaries, however, has been cautious. Uribe has offered an amnesty for those willing to serve a brief period of confinement, turn in their arms and pay cash fines. He has also, however, at the insistence of the United States, trained a special antiparamilitary brigade with the express mission of hunting down paramilitaries who persist in egregious human rights violations. To a certain degree this has resulted in kinder, gentler paramilitaries. There has been a discernible decline in paramilitary murders in Colombia—although this may be only the result of their having prevailed in many contested areas.

In the meantime, however, the paramilitaries have become deeply entrenched in the country's power structure. By some arguments they control 30 percent or more of the seats in Congress as well as a number of governorships. Some observers have even argued that Castaño could have been elected president had he not gone into hiding after being indicted by the United States. Given this kind of power, Uribe's amnesty offer has produced violent conflicts between those who effectively want to go straight and those who are reluctant to give up what Colombians call *la vida facil*—"the high life." In April, Castaño himself was ambushed by a group of his own lieutenants who apparently feared he was going to rat them out to the Americans. According to various reports, Castaño was either killed or somehow managed to flee into a US witness-protection program (which US authorities deny). In either case, he has disappeared, leaving the field free to his rival, Diego Fernando Murillo, known as Don Berna, a man who once took a giant step up the slippery cocaine slope by betraying his boss, Pablo Escobar. Don Berna (who was recently indicted by the United States for drug trafficking) has raised strong objections to Uribe's amnesty terms, in-

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sisting he will not accept extradition or spend a day in jail—a move that could sink Uribe's plans. Not long after Castaño's disappearance, Carlos Mauricio García, an AUC leader openly critical of Don Berna, posed a question to a *New York Times* journalist: "What could happen to me, that they kill me with a bigger bullet...or that they kill me several times?" Shortly afterward he was fatally shot while strolling on the beachfront in Santa Marta.

If cocaine has such a hold on Colombia, it is in large part because of what Grace Livingstone politely calls the "exclusionary character of the state," which has long been administered, both politically and financially, for the benefit of a wealthy minority. Colombian income inequality has only worsened over the past decade as Colombia, along with much of the rest of Latin America, has fallen for the folly of neoliberal economics. Today, almost 80 percent of Colombia's rural population fall beneath the poverty line, and 46 percent fall beneath what Livingstone refers to as the "indigence line," a line of extreme poverty beneath which "basic subsistence needs are not met." For a peasant living in such conditions, coca farming has a natural appeal. As Robin Kirk points out, cocaine in Colombia has been a "small entrepreneur's dream" and a great boon to peasants who have grown it, despite the havoc it has unleashed. Kirk argues that unlike gold, oil, rubber and other raw commodities that have historically been extracted from the region—the profits from which were often entirely retained by the wholesalers—cocaine has allowed peasants to hold on to some of the wealth they have created, just as tobacco has done for so many small farmers in the American South.

In *Loyal Soldiers in the Cocaine Kingdom: Tales of Drugs, Mules, and Gunmen*, the exiled Colombian writer Alfredo Molano makes a similar point. Molano's book consists of a series of populist portraits of the little people in the cocaine business—people who for the most part have gambled and lost, the sort of folks whom, as he puts it, "our compatriots would be happy to bury so as not to cause embarrassment at embassy cocktail parties." (Molano interviewed many of his subjects in prison.) Most are motivated by a desperate desire to escape the poverty that afflicts the vast majority of ordinary Colombians. In each case, cocaine offers the prospect of financial relief—of freedom, really, to use a word that President Bush seems to be unable to complete a sentence without. A man Molano refers to as Scuzzball, the son of peasants

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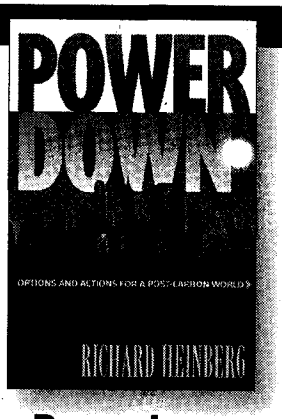

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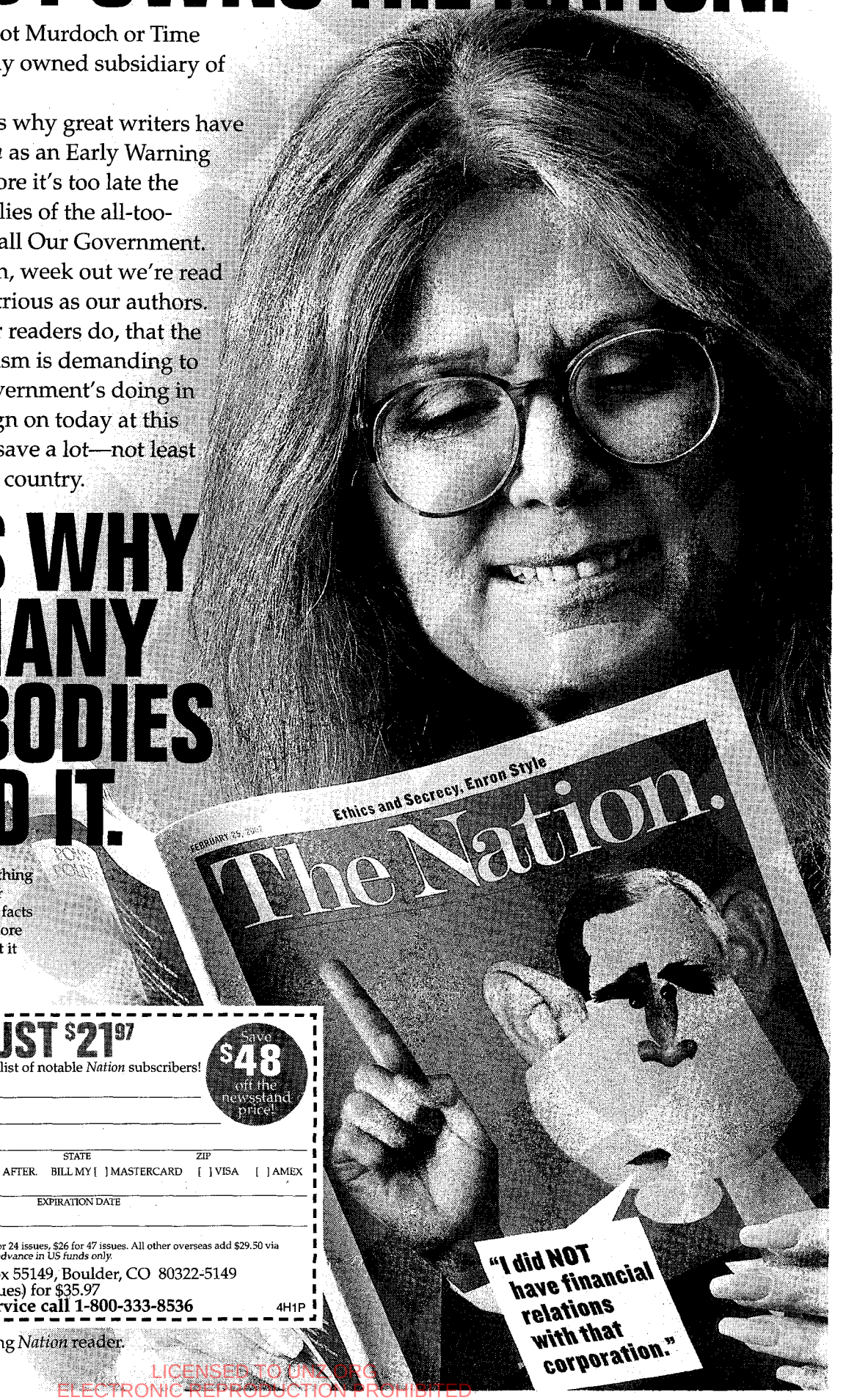

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from the southern state of Putumayo, leaves home at the age of 13 because, as he puts it, "there's no life where we were living and it was time to go looking for it." Endowed with natural intelligence, Scuzzball becomes an artist at cocaine extraction and sets himself up as a chemist, hiring out his knowledge so that his fellow peasants can coax a little more product out of their coca bushes. Eventually, however, Scuzzball's entrepreneurial instincts lead him into trafficking. He is betrayed, and by the time Molano meets Scuzzball, he is doing time in a Bolivian prison in Cochabamba. "In Colombia," Scuzzball ruefully tells Molano, "it's we nameless people who moved [into the cocaine trade]...until those with nice last names started to ask us for help and little by little we gave it to them, and eventually we take them as partners in the business."

The situation is much the same for the poor of Colombia's slums. "The Mule Driver," another Molano character, describes the gamble taken by the "mules" who transport cocaine on airlines. The mules wrap the cocaine in condoms and swallow them. "If the rubber tears, you'll live a few hours; if it doesn't break but the police seize you, you'll spend eight years of your life behind bars; if you carry it off, you've laid the first layer of bricks that goes towards building a wall between you and poverty."

Molano doesn't romanticize this impulse, which is both corrupting and fraught with moral ambiguity. Colombia's legal products have never sold well enough either internally or in the United States to generate significant numbers of stable jobs. The few jobs that Colombia's globalized neoliberal economy has kicked up are low-wage and nonglamorous—offering little more than what Kirk refers to as "the cheap seat at the world's parade." By contrast, the cocaine business offers fabulous riches and far sexier possibilities—what Kirk describes as "integration through crime." Although for a person of few prospects it's a tempting line of work, it has obvious drawbacks. The Mule Driver, for example, starts as a poor liquor-store delivery boy infatuated with a rich girl—the daughter of the owner of a whorehouse. After he loses his job as the result of this infatuation, his brother tells him that the job was beneath his dignity anyway and advises him to get into cocaine. "Why should I have a 'job' that has me stooping to work at the beck and call of a boss," the Mule Driver argues to himself, "killing myself for a lousy salary that would never compensate me." Although he makes good money for a while, he ultimately gets betrayed by the girlfriend and winds up doing twenty-two years in a Madrid prison.

The Colombian cocaine trade is so pervasive that it threatens to turn the country into a collection of narco-run feudal statelets. The central ambition of Uribe's version of Plan Colombia may be to assert the primacy of the state in regions where it has seldom if ever been a factor. This depends on both defeating FARC and taming and integrating the paramilitaries.

Beneath the violence of Colombian life, according to Michael Taussig, lies a 'culture of terror' whose principal arm is unemployment.

But cocaine is a response to poverty, and it's highly unlikely that Uribe will be able to wean his compatriots off what Colombians call "the little parakeet" without some program to address the country's savage inequalities. Uribe has a plan of sorts—economic liberalization and a tight alliance with the United States. Unnoticed in the fuss surrounding the effort to renew Plan Colombia has been Uribe's project to negotiate a bilateral free-trade agreement with the United States. This would reduce Colombia's already small social-welfare programs and open the country up to more foreign investment. What would a country dependent on neoliberal economics and incorporating the new, more reasonable paramilitaries look like?

Michael Taussig offers a glimpse of the possibilities in his book *Law in a Lawless Land: Diary of a* Limpieza *in Colombia—limpieza* being the term the paramilitaries use to refer to "cleansing" a region of its undesirable elements. Taussig, an anthropologist at the other Columbia (the one on the Upper West Side of New York City) has been doing fieldwork since 1969 in a small city in the Cauca River Valley, a few miles from Cali. Some time around the year 2000, a tax-free, free-trade industrial zone was established just outside town. In February of the following year, a group of paramilitaries move in, hired—Taussig's informants tell him—by the "town's business elite." In the 1990s, in other regions of Colombia, the style of the paramilitaries would have been to move into a town such as Taussig's, identify the supposed guerrilla sympathizers and massacre them all at once, thereby creating headlines and embarrassing human rights inquiries. But in the new millennium the paramilitaries operate in a more discreet fashion, and their enemies are no longer so much political as they are economic.

In Taussig's town, they move into El Cupido, a love hotel downtown, with computer lists helpfully provided by military intelligence and go about the work of cleansing the town of its *delincuentes*—"undesirables," a few at a time. Their victims include not so much leftists or even political activists but street people: kids who've had "problems with the law," beggars, a madwoman, prostitutes not affiliated with El Cupido and a young man who, drunk in the middle of town one evening, makes the mistake of yelling at the paras: *Que salgan hijeputas*—"get out of here, you sons of whores!" He's killed for his outburst and his body lies on the street all night because people are afraid to move it. In neighboring towns other paramilitaries ban long hair or earrings on men, miniskirts on women, baseball hats worn backward and a gay beauty contest. Life under the paramilitaries doesn't sound like a whole lot of fun.

Taussig's book is based on a diary he kept during two weeks he spent in the town in May of 2001 during the fourth month of its paramilitary reign. His most interesting discovery is the support the paramilitaries have in town. One of his informants tells him that eight of ten of the townspeople are for them. There's a reason for this. Until the 1950s Taussig's part of the Cauca River Valley was dominated by small peasant farms. In their river-valley plots, the peasants (descendants of former African slaves) grew cacao trees, plantain trees, banana trees, coffee trees, orange trees, lemon trees, avocado trees, papaya trees, guava trees and many other trees besides. The peasants thereby created a mixed harvest that mimicked the tropical rain forest, required no store-bought fertilizers, no pesticides, little labor, little capital and, perhaps most important, created a continuous, year-round income.

But, sometime in the 1950s, the sugar industry arrived. The peasant farms were plowed under and everyone went to work on the new plantations (for the ultimate benefit, as Taussig points out, of a few white-skinned families in Cali). At first there was plenty of need for labor, but then, as Taussig puts it, "chemicals and machines made the workers idle." By the time the paramilitaries arrived, a shantytown of the unemployed had grown at one end of town, a slum that became so unruly that the police were afraid to enter. With no prospects for education or work, the kids formed gangs and turned to crime. Grad-

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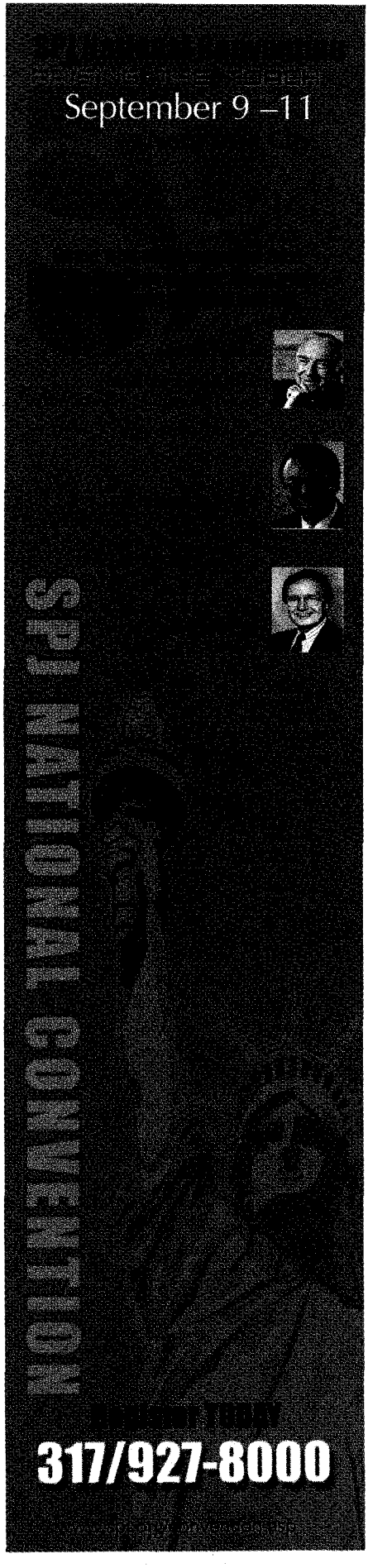

ually, the town fell victim to a youth-gang-based crime wave that it would apparently do anything to solve. Taussig happens upon a gang funeral and witnesses the anarchic violence, the fights, the boombox hip-hop, the weird (for provincial Colombia) fashion, and the weird (for provincial Colombia) hair-dos. He notes one of the kids wearing an English-language T-shirt that says: DEATH IS NATURE'S WAY OF SAYING SLOW DOWN.

In Taussig's town, he notes that the paramilitaries have also been recruited out of the ranks of the unemployed. Former soldiers unable to find other jobs dominate their ranks. The murder of the street kids—the children of other unemployed Colombians—is bad enough, but beneath this obvious terror, Taussig perceives a deeper kind of terror. What he sees is an economic "culture of terror" that afflicts everybody in the neoliberal world of his town. The principal arm of this culture of terror is unemployment. Neoliberalism is supposed to generate jobs and solve unemployment, but that's an act of faith, really, and not enough attention has been given to the possibility that it might just be the problem cruelly masquerading as the solution. Although each town in Colombia has its own logic, Taussig makes a convincing case that in this new Colombia, "like the plants that went under, like the forest that disappeared, human nature as much as nature is facing a brave new world for which there is no history or pre-history." ■

Holy Water

JANE HOLTZ KAY

WALDEN POND: A History. By W. Barksdale Maynard. Oxford. 404 pp. $35.

Walden Pond is America's environmental holy land, the naturalist's sacred site and Concord's local swimming pool. The iconic image of living in solitude amid nature's wildness, immortalized in Henry David Thoreau's *Walden*, has made the pond's power as place endure. Long after the transcendentalists of Thoreau's generation worshiped its deep waters, latter-day pilgrims seek out its shores as poets and philosophers once did. So, alas, do the crowds, who, towel to towel, jam the narrow beach, splash in the cool waters and blare boomboxes as the twenty-first century rolls along.

As much artifact and feel-good brand name as national treasure, Walden Pond, with its precious shores and wooded surrounds, creates a burden for our times: How shall we preserve the waters and wildness? How conserve the cairn of rocks piled by passing worshipers who throw a stone on this hillock at the far end of the pond as a marker—and more: How shall we make the memories of Thoreau's *Walden,* set in the historic town of Concord, into a map of the mindset of this scribe and his New England literary peers and heirs? How relay Thoreau's genius as science or natural history writer and guiding light to such spiritual seekers and holy men as Gandhi?

Still more problematical: How do we maintain the Pond's ongoing life, the ecology of the larger Walden Woods and the use and beauty of the town of Concord, whose village values defined Thoreau's core as much as the woods honored by his classic volume? Scribe and saunterer in equal measure—a precise four hours a day devoted to each, one biographer has written—Thoreau is a whole man hard to blend with this holistic environment. Blessed, or cursed, with this intellectual-cum-physical legacy, W. Barksdale Maynard has taken on no small task as biographer (or is it topo-biographer?) in *Walden Pond: A History.*

The architectural historian must combine the stories of the physical life of the pond and its surrounding environs with the intellectual life of the author (and his congregation of Concord writers and philosophers), all the while revealing the natural and political philosopher-cum-conservationist writer himself. He must bring us the oft-described Henry David Thoreau whose stirring injunctions defined a world of nature that embraced the beauty of human settlement along with the essentiality of the wildness that surrounded it.

Thoreau's coda for community—"every town should have a park, or rather a primitive forest, of five hundred or a thousand acres, where a stick should never be cut for fuel, a common possession forever"—

Jane Holtz Kay (JHoltzKay@aol.com), architecture critic of The Nation, *is the author of* Asphalt Nation *(California).*

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resonates still, perhaps more than ever, as the town of Concord becomes less town and more sprawling suburb, its wildness more tame. Walden matters, Maynard notes, because it is of the "earthy and profane." And a look at Walden Pond and its environs must—and in this case often does—illuminate the role of both, recording the lexicon of impulses toward nature and the back-to-the-land movements of Thoreau's time and ours, the mishaps caused by users of both the sacred site and the larger township. It must be a biography of a man, a lake and a shifting approach to the larger natural world. This ambitious book covers many, but not all, of these essentials.

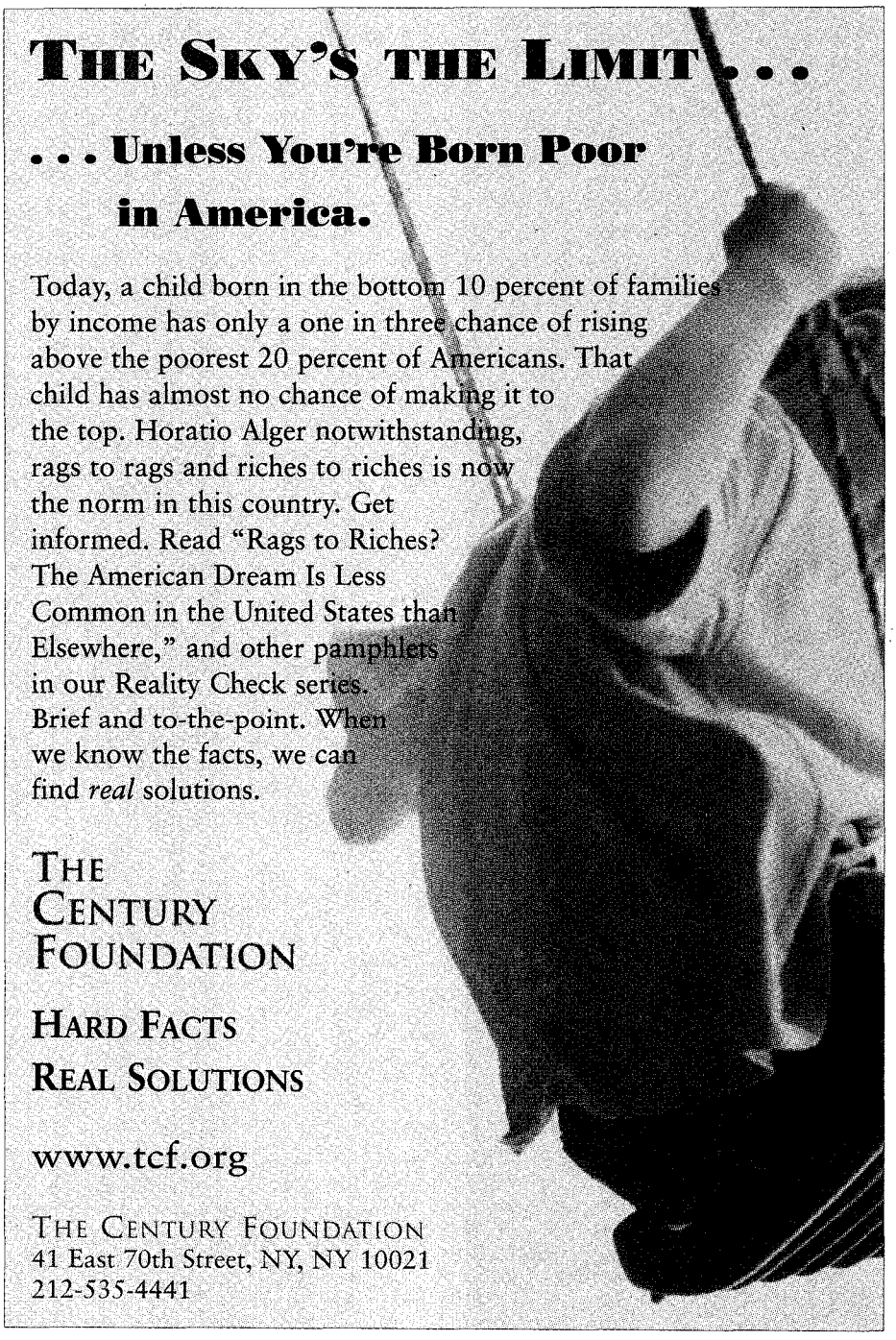
From the early years, when local bathers shared the forty-foot-deep kettle hole—which, Maynard tells us, could hold a "102-foot, seven-story office building...in the middle"—the pond has served workaday fishermen and foresters, with much damage caused by the latter (which Maynard chronicles well). No idyll, the pond and Thoreau's mid-nineteenth-century world suffered the smoldering, smoke-spitting railroad. "That devilish Iron Horse, whose ear-rending neigh is heard throughout the town," Thoreau wrote of this clamorous invader, as his heirs might describe the raucous use of today's Walden Woods, invaded by the seeping sprawl and blatant McMansions consuming the twenty-first century's Concord.

The pond and its literary world had symbolic and historic dimensions in both Thoreau's days and those that followed, and Maynard takes us step by step through this chronology. He records the work of Thoreau along with the high-minded literary, philosophical and political stewards and sojourners of mid-century, drawing a wide arc from the nineteenth-century reformers and transcendental commune-dwellers of places like Brook Farm. Covering a span of history from Thoreau's patron Emerson to the odysseys of Gandhi and like-minded conservationists, he also describes our rowdier recent times, as the latest decades witness the rips and tears that rend the landscape's literary/social/ecological fabric.

Maynard describes this sainted place—its fractious geological, historic and spiritual history—in depth and with detail, elaborating on the tale of Walden Pond, the working/walking waterhole for fishing, strolling and forestry; Walden, the symbolic site for the literati of the New England renaissance; and Walden, an ecological center of the larger environs of Walden Woods. The tale of launching Walden's creation through Thoreau's contact with the literary circle of the Concord Renaissance adds texture as Maynard traces the actual construction of the hut in 1845 on the pond where the writer would live for two years, two months and two days.

This book arrives on the 150th anniversary of *Walden*. Yet it also honors the bicentennial of Ralph Waldo Emerson's birth, reinforcing this father-figure's major influence through the formidable author's own *Nature* and other essays as well as in the works of his less gregarious student. Maynard dutifully traces the older sage's inspiration and aid to the young Thoreau. "[Emerson's] passion was the cultivation of American poets on American soil," he writes. And where better than Walden to serve the natural, outdoor impulses that transcended our lust of commerce, the more sociable elder observed, thus subsidizing Thoreau's sojourn into his famous cabin, that "tiny house" in the woods.

Living Emerson's vaunted self-reliance and "solitude in a tiny space" on the philosopher's property did not last long for the protégé of this communal, family-oriented, father figure. Maynard's reading of *Walden* offers only a modest commentary on the dailiness of his life there (putting pen to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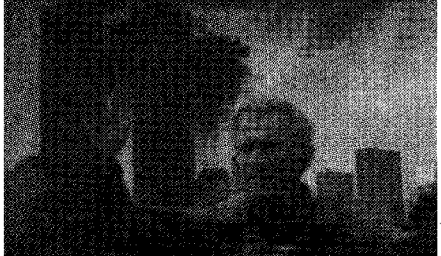
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paper is, after all, not exactly a dramatic tale), with no parsing of its contents. But Thoreau's majestic book, much of it completed elsewhere, remains as—if not more—lyrical today as in its youth.

Part lore, part natural history, *Walden* would be the "choral hymn" of a new age. Surpassing Europe's wonders, transcending America's poets, some said, and heralding the perfect New Man: The ode to Nature and the perfect site, a wooded territory not far, of course, from the cozy community of Concord and his family (as so many have noted—often snidely—of late), would stir the world. Meanwhile, *Walden; Or, Life in the Woods*, as the unabridged version has it, remains an icon, as does its author in this 150th anniversary year offering.

Maynard's book bears the imprimatur of nature's most prescient scientist-hero today, Edward O. Wilson. Wilson's cover blurb characterizes this book as "what will be the enduring chronicle, from Thoreau's first dream to our time, of one of America's, and the world's, most important historical sites." But for all that praise, and for all Thoreau's well-detailed accounting of nature's nobility embodied in the Pond, the site is as much battleground as shrine. The conflict between the earlier era of skinny-dipping historian Frederick Turner and the overtaking of the site in the last quarter of the twentieth century by the "Dirty Diaper Beach" crowd when "eight, ten, perhaps even fifteen thousand" visitors jammed the beach, continues to our day. The conflict expanded in the 1980s when developer Mort Zuckerman, then chief of Boston Properties, proposed building a massive office space in the Walden area. The resulting protest probably protected the property near to the pond itself, but not the wider world of Walden Woods or the town of Concord, which larger-minded naturalists, and town lovers like Thoreau himself, had sought to secure.

Today, the actual pond, offering everything from theatrical renderings by a costumed "Henry David" poised before "his" rebuilt cabin to crowded beaches and parking lots, has become, shall we say, less than inspiring. Still more disconcerting, the new claimant to the Walden legacy, rock star Don Henley, has taken over and squelched even more spiritual values of the place in the name of fixup. His Walden Woods Project is a distorted attempt to extend Thoreau's city-country values to today's generation; the so-called eco-guy's remoteness from the natural man or spiritual guru—that is, from both the mien and the meaning of Thoreau's world, where woods and town entwine to support historic values—makes him an odd advocate indeed for this sacred space. Alternating lectures by various stewards with Bette Midler fundraisers, the project arouses distrust for being more a publicity machine for Henley than a scholarly inquiry on Thoreau or a true conservation-minded approach to save his environmental heritage.

Unfortunately, such contemporary issues, and Concord's can-of-worms political fractionalizing and backbiting, get less than perfunctory acknowledgment from Maynard, whose biography lists serving as a consultant and visiting scholar for the Henley-funded Walden Woods Project. Competing organizations and interests have made Walden Pond's current supervision run counter to their seer's work and lead observers like the scholar Tom Blanding to see the holy site devolve into a local snake pit of controversy. Those who value Thoreau's views on the wider impact of Walden Woods as an ecological anthem—and who have promoted the National Trust for Historic Preservation's listing of the larger territory as one of America's eleven most endangered historic places—continue to critique the opportunistic showboaters of recent times. While concerned with Walden's condition as a "community bathtub," scholars and protectors like Blanding are still more dismayed by the Walden Woods Project's failure to extend the wider town-country values to the whole of Concord, as Walden's bard would have wished.

Sometimes it seems that as much is absent as present in this ambitious book, from the specific politics of today's pond to the last decades of Thoreau's post-Walden life. Despite Edward O. Wilson's wonder at how "an amateur naturalist perched in a toy house on the edge of a ravaged woodlot became the founding saint of the conservation movement," the reader avid to discover more about Thoreau's work as a naturalist will not find enough to flesh out the writer-philosopher's botanical and preservation skills.

Nor will Maynard's book satisfy curiosity about Thoreau's life, his love, his early death. No mention is made of any connection between his premature passing and his job helping his father tool lead pencils in the so-called Yellow House, the impact of which might have combined with the family strain of tuberculosis to kill him. Nor do we read much of the power of his great tract on civil disobedience. Certainly, the pond was task enough as subject, but some attention to Thoreau's personal life as well as a mention of the over-politicized politics of the present, which have made some Concordians behave like warriors in a town

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feud, would have fleshed out and finished this work.

Despite such omissions, *Walden Pond: A History* is a worthy book on the forested Pond and its community as well as a hallowed writer whose work will last far longer than the political imbroglios surrounding it. The sanctified notions of simplicity, of seeking *rus* in *urbe*, country and city, Walden and Concord, are not lost in the telling of a tale that goes beyond the life of the "public hermit" to the place. If Maynard is naïve or reticent about the recent squabbles and recreationalization of the holy land, his insights on the past have real merit.

As symbol and sampler of the congestion that distresses our built and natural environment today, Walden and Walden Pond matter. "At present I am a sojourner in civil life again," Thoreau wrote in "Economy," reflecting on his respect for town and pond, communal life and wildness—and the necessity of their parallel health. Today, that aspect of the eco-master's theology is an even more urgent message to bring to bear on the fate of the earth. ■

FILMS

Shadows and Smog

STUART KLAWANS

I, ROBOT • LOS ANGELES PLAYS ITSELF • THE BOURNE SUPREMACY

I paid to see Will Smith fight legions of robots, and what I got was a trip back to Wabash Street. Rear entrance to the fine department stores of my youth, front portal to respectable lunchrooms, Wabash always seemed to me the Loop's most beautiful street, since its second-best air felt right for the Second City. Masonry facades guarded its edges, behind which rose many floors of nondescript offices doing a cash business. Overhead, shadowing and shaking you, ran the el. On the clearest spring day, you could turn onto Wabash and step into a twilight drizzle, an effect that lent moodiness and semi-industrial power to places that otherwise might have seemed too genteel for Chicago: the bookstore, the record store, the sheet-music dealer. All this, I remember from the 1950s and '60s—but having now seen Wabash in 2035, I can tell you it still feels like itself, or more so, with robots weaving their way busily among the humans.

The rightness of the urban setting, and (more often) its wrongness, turn out to be the most interesting feature of *I, Robot*. Directed by Alex Proyas from a script by Jeff Vintar and Akiva Goldsman, with a tip of the hat to Isaac Asimov, *I, Robot* functions reasonably well as a whodunit, a special-effects extravaganza, a showcase for Will Smith's genial sarcasm, a machine for fabricating the nuclear family. (I doubt I'm giving away much when I say that Smith's police detective, a chronic loner, must hook up with an equally detached research scientist, having been drawn to her by an ingenuous, orphaned robot named Sonny.) Never mind the philosophical and political implications, which are meant to be no more enduring than your bag of popcorn. *I, Robot* is satisfactory as a story, appealing as a star turn but arresting only as production design—in particular, for its vision of a specific American city.

A minor topic, you might say. Our endangered republic will neither stand nor fall on the merits of *I, Robot*, any more than the film will succeed or fail through urbanism. About the latter point, I note that audiences mostly want to smile at Smith's lanky, cranky performance and marvel at the robots, which spring about like a swarm of grasshoppers. Only Chicago natives, perhaps, will care that the computer-generated Wabash Street comes convincingly to life, or that the digital shoreline is dead. (I'm willing to believe that by 2035, much of the water will have dried up—but what megalomaniac built the pier of a suspension bridge at the edge of Lake Michigan?) Still, I find myself mulling over these background details, having been newly awakened to them and their possible import by Thom Andersen, a filmmaker-scholar whose exhaustive and fascinating documentary *Los Angeles Plays Itself* is currently running at New York's Film Forum.

Andersen (who was born in Chicago, by the way) has almost as many points to make in *Los Angeles Plays Itself* as the film has minutes—169, including credits. I will

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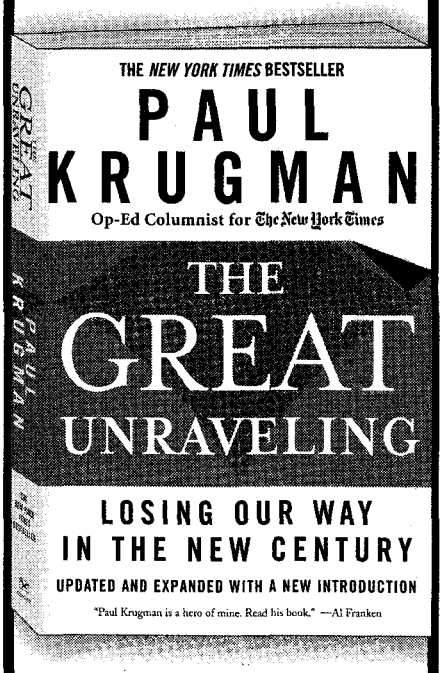
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dispense with my objections by saying that, with so much on his mind, Andersen sometimes organizes the work in the manner of a saloon orator: "And another thing." Apart from that, though, I like pretty much everything he's done, from the fascinating opening montage—a tour of Los Angeles as it's been pictured in dozens of movies—to the closing argument against cynicism, as it's been perpetrated in films such as *Chinatown* and *L.A. Confidential*. And another thing: Andersen hates that diminutive, LA. "Only a city with an inferiority complex would allow it."

Speaking as a longtime resident of the city—or, rather, using a laconic voiceover narrator to speak for him—Andersen begins by observing that the standard movie image of Los Angeles is doubly false. In the first place, the movies distort urban space for the purposes of cinematography and storytelling. The center-city skyscrapers, for example, though anomalous in the bigger and flatter scheme, can fill a frame nicely, which is perhaps why "the movies love downtown more than we do." In the second place, America's show-business culture has persuaded us to substitute a part for the whole—to say Hollywood when we mean Los Angeles—even though only one resident in forty works in the film industry. If I were to reduce Andersen's argument, unfairly, to a single point, I might say that he wants Hollywood to disgorge the real city it has swallowed. He hopes our myth of LA will change and that the movies will change too, to be more true to lived experience.

At this point, an unsympathetic viewer might say that Andersen is too severe. Film has always been a trick mirror as much as a window, a tool for Méliès's magic acts as much as the Lumières' explorations. But Andersen is not trying to ban fantasy. He just wants to move beyond fantasies that are too constrained and too constraining—the ones that betray their crabbed nature by repeating themselves endlessly, and that tell us our society, too, turns in an unbreakable cycle. In movie after movie set in Los Angeles, the rich and corrupt characters live up in the hills, in Modernist houses by Frank Lloyd Wright or Richard Neutra, while the poor live in flatland bungalows, next to oil refineries or in gang-war zones. Nothing lies between these two spaces, except for those picturesque downtown towers; and so into this vacuum, which is as much imaginative as physical, moviemakers introduce various secret histories of the city, which explain how the rich people got up on the hill and why there's no use complaining, since they will stay there forever. When Andersen prescribes a heavier dose of realism for the movies, it's to help liberate us from the tedium of these clichés, the hopelessness of this conspiratorial mindset. He praises neorealists such as Billy Woodberry, Charles Burnett and the almost-forgotten Kent MacKenzie (maker of *The Exiles*, a film about Navajos living in Los Angeles) not so much to propose a model as to point toward an escape route, into a better world and better films.

So there is purpose to Andersen's literal-mindedness when he devotes a section of *Los Angeles Plays Itself* to car-chase sequences that violate the actual street layout. "Silly geography," he says, "makes for silly movies." And a respect for physical space makes for more engaging movies, even when they're genre thrillers. Look, for example, at the wholly disposable *Bourne Supremacy*, directed by Paul Greengrass in the wake of Doug Liman's far superior *Bourne Identity*. You may recall, from the earlier picture, a car chase that was cleverly conceived, meaningful for the characters and photographed with exhilarating immediacy—you could always see the route by which to careen from A to B. *The Bourne Supremacy* tries to top the original by offering two car chases; but they both chop space into blurry, discontinuous fragments, randomly intercut with close-ups of the drivers, so there's no sense of onrushing movement. The kinetic experience is what you'd get by whipping your head side to side.

As with the car chases, so with *The Bourne Supremacy* as a whole. The cities that qualify this thriller as "international" exist on screen as mere rebuses: a series of establishing shots of landmarks, each topped by white sans-serif letters that name the locale.

In *Los Angeles Plays Itself*, Andersen argues that even a touristic approach toward cities, like Hitchcock's, is far preferable to such fakery. The reason, ultimately, is political. For Andersen, the movies' abandonment of urban texture is part of the larger problem of our society's foreclosure of public space. A case in point, which he presents through clips from three decades of movies: the gradual destruction and reconstitution of Los Angeles's Bunker Hill neighborhood, which has gone from modest middle-class enclave to raffish boarding-house district to urban desert to corporate fantasyland. Not surprisingly, films that show Bunker Hill have grown glassy in spirit, as the area's dwindling life has been shut away in private towers. By contrast, films that dwell on public places may also portray a real community, even if the story and style verge on delirium. A case in point: *Rebel Without a Cause*, in which Nicholas Ray's luridly exaggerated images of Los

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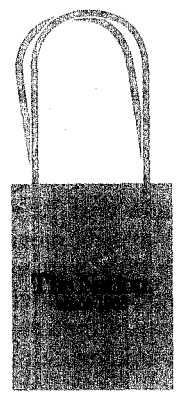

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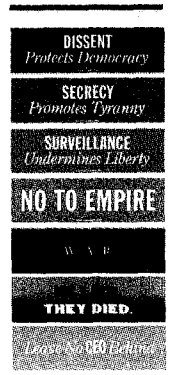

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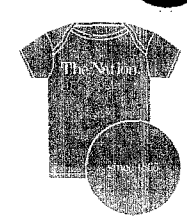

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Angeles landmarks convey the fevered visions of a society of teenagers.

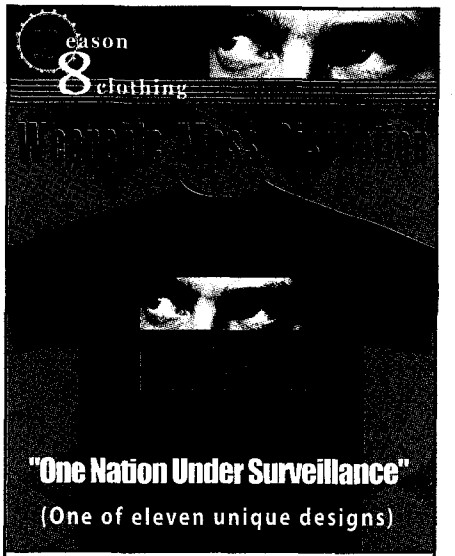
This brings me, of course, to *Spider-Man 2*. My young friend Ben Letzler, whose very existence refutes the claim that cinephilia is dead, writes from Berlin that I was wrong to be disappointed by this movie, and reactionary to prefer *Before Sunset*. Other *Nation* readers have issued a similar challenge. Can I really fault *Spider-Man 2* so severely for running an el through Manhattan?

I can; I do. The joy of the first *Spider-Man* came in no small measure from seeing authentic, often unglamorous locations wedded to the special effects. You did not need to reside in New York to recognize the spaces as genuine; you could sense their life pulsing around and through the characters. That respect for actual urban space is also present in *Spider-Man 2*, but only a little and mostly in the first reel, when Peter has to negotiate Midtown traffic to make a pizza delivery. After that, the movie becomes (to use Andersen's critical jargon) a little silly in its cityscape. The movie calls up an el where none exists, for a too-conventional fight scene; and then, as if in balance, it makes a real place, Aunt May's house, disappear, without bothering to specify where Aunt May will go.

Are these problems fatal? No. I found much to enjoy in *Spider-Man 2*; but I'd still rather watch Celine and Jesse move slowly through the real, inhabited Paris of *Before Sunset*. Call it a high-tourist movie if you will—again, I borrow the term from Andersen—but *Before Sunset* makes its characters deal with one another in spaces that are continuous, thickly textured and not entirely controllable by a filmmaker; and those qualities carry over to the performances as well. The result? Celine and Jesse are interesting not for what they say and do as individuals but for what happens between them. The movie's focus is always on their interaction, which is so amply charged that it can even register thoughts about poverty, environmental decay and the imperialism practiced by one character's nation.

Before Sunset lets us stray far from the cynical myths of Los Angeles, and far from robotic behavior. That's what can happen when a movie risks going into the city.

Correction: In reviewing *Fahrenheit 9/11*, I mistakenly wrote that all of the members of the House who contested the Electoral College decision in 2000 were African-American. In fact, the late Representative Patsy Takemoto Mink also entered an objection. My thanks to the readers who pointed out the error. ■



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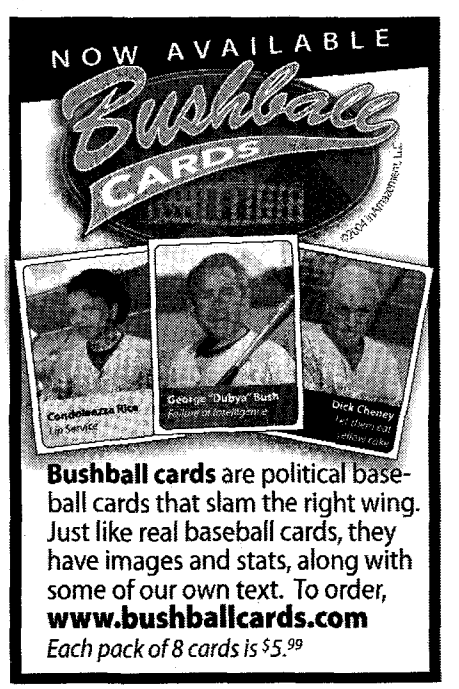

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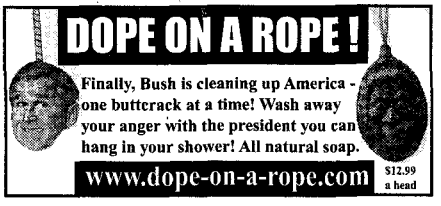
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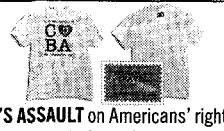

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SAN FRANCISCO PSYCHOTHERAPIST treats depression, relationship issues, anxiety, crises. Consultation available. Sliding scale. Paula Holt, LCSW, (415) 289-6990.

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Attach ad, typewritten if possible.

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PUZZLE NO. 2951

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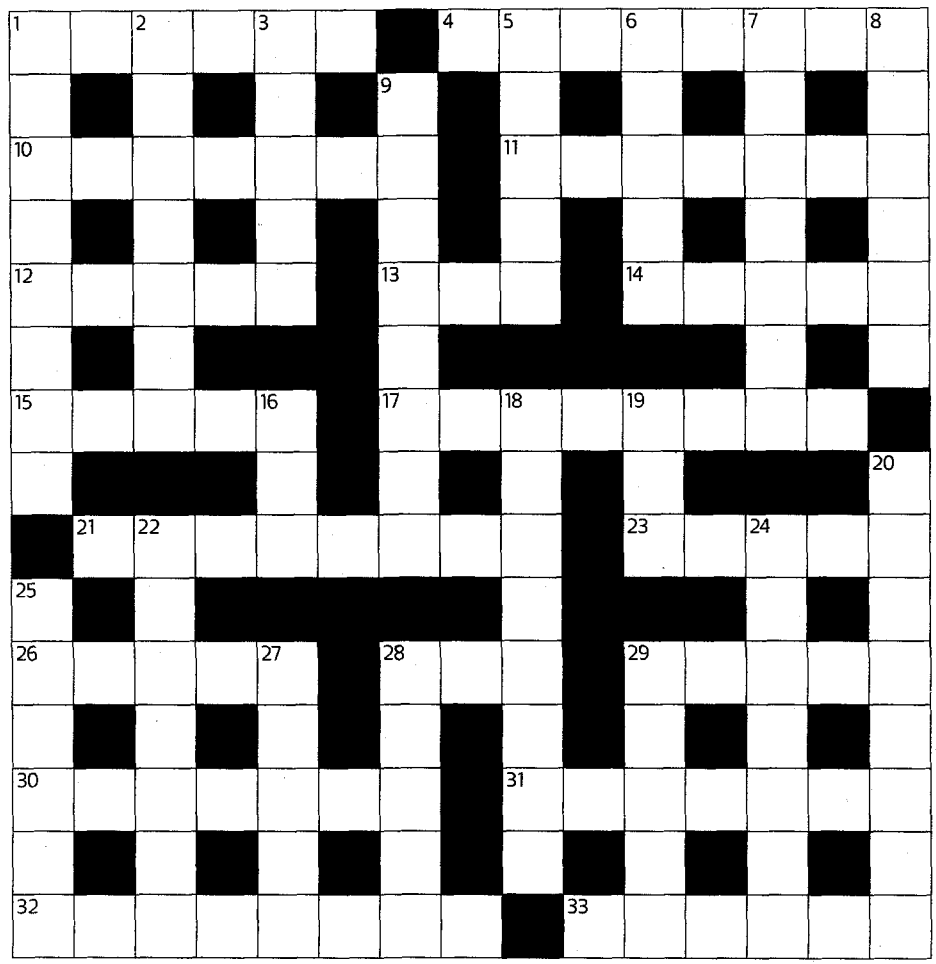

ACROSS

1 Precede the purpose of "self." (6)

4 One who hopes for what killed Cleo to have personal investment on part of the Bible. (8)

10 A place in Scandinavia giving up an afterthought accordingly, as they say in Paris… (7)

11 …with one who may be quite a cut-up, however dear to Parisians. (7)

12, 13 and **14** Proving a legal test is a matter of experiment and mistake-making. (5,3,5)

15 A grinder of this doesn't make chopped liver—though one who collects for him might make a monkey of himself. (5)

17 Our part of the world is supposed to represent where the sun sets. (8)

21 You'll need a little bit of backbone, and possibly evert something that gives an uplift. (8)

23 The onetime computer czar is responsible for several openings here. (5)

26, 28 and **29** The thing you might give your pets may involve the job of your better half (whichever that is)! (3,2,3,5)

30 Be backward in what might describe your circle, and you'll see spring back here. (7)

31 What Lincoln was watching finally would be our American type. (7)

32 Those who traveled in lower Africa at one time—like many travelers today. (8)

33 Made of the same, taking an able type, so-called. (6)

DOWN

1 Something like an apple having a particle of accomplishment, in a sense. (8)

2 The way certain entertainers may be knocking on your door? (7)

3 A chalice with certain powers, though you get to feel bad after a great beginning. (5)

5 See 16

6, 19 and **29** down Where to find the Snoopy type, occasionally—though one doesn't like to be put this way by the little woman. (2,3,8)

7 This proved a pain to Mr. Reagan, and was really hell! (7)

8 A matador ripped down, alternatively up, this. (6)

9 Traditionally Tom has a way of parting with a place underground. (8)

16 and **5** Just fair, like the Toons. (3,2,3)

18 Grow together with something to keep you hot—to possibly see around the corner, as a start. (8)

19 See 6

20 Introduces Poe's character to evil! (6,2)

22 Make what sounds like a night of it. (7)

24 The main business of many nice places not exactly out over the right belief. (7)

25 Somewhat whimsical nonsense, which might bring down the house. (3,3)

27 What those that say "they shall not pass" sometimes do to their charges. (5)

28 A famous 29 that sounds like it has a couple of openings for you. (5)

29 See 6

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 2950

R	A	C	I	A	L	L	Y	■	H	A	N	S	O	M
E	■	O	■	L	■	A	■	■	N	■	A	■	O	■
C	O	M	M	A	N	D	■	S	N	A	P	P	E	R
I	■	M	■	M	■	Y	■	E	■	G	■	P	■	A
P	R	O	V	E	R	B	■	A	I	R	F	O	I	L
E	■	N	■	D	■	O	■	L	■	A	■	R	■	I
■	■	S	T	A	T	U	S	S	Y	M	B	O	L	S
C	■	■	■	■	■	N	■	K	■	■	■	■	■	T
H	O	L	Y	M	A	T	R	I	M	O	N	Y	■	■
E	■	E	■	A	■	I	■	N	■	C	■	E	■	P
C	H	A	I	N	O	F	■	C	H	A	G	A	L	L
K	■	S	■	A	■	U	■	O	■	R	■	R	■	A
E	T	H	I	C	A	L	■	A	V	I	G	N	O	N
R	■	E	■	L	■	■	■	T	■	N	■	E	■	E
S	Y	S	T	E	M	■	I	S	L	A	N	D	E	R

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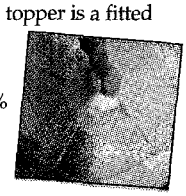
FREE heavyweight mattress pad included. Included with the Memory Foam Ultra mattress topper is a fitted mattress pad. It's heavyweight and quilted, and made of 200-count 100% cotton with a 14-inch deep stretchable skirt to fit a mattress up to 21 inches thick.



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	Why It's Important	Memory Foam Ultra (MFU)	Brand X	MFU/Brand X Comparison
Thickness	Comfort	2.0 inch	1.25 inch	MFU almost double
Strength in psi	Durability	18 psi	14 psi	MFU better
Comfort Zones	Comfort and support	6 zones	Flat surface	MFU is much better
Body Impressions (pressure/humidity)	Durability. Lower the %, the better topper longevity.	20%	73%	MFU is much better
Recovery Time sec. (72 degrees F)	More visco-elasticity= slower recovery time	15 sec.	<2 sec.	MFU is much better
Quilted mattress pad	Durability & comfort	Yes	No	MFU better
Price (twin size)	Best dollar/value ratio	$99.90	Cheap!	MFU has more value

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